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The Soldier's Wife.

London, Henry Colburn, 1846.

MARY ANNE WELLINGTON,

THE

SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER,

WIFE, AND WIDOW.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

“THE HISTORY OF MARGARET CATCHPOLE.”

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

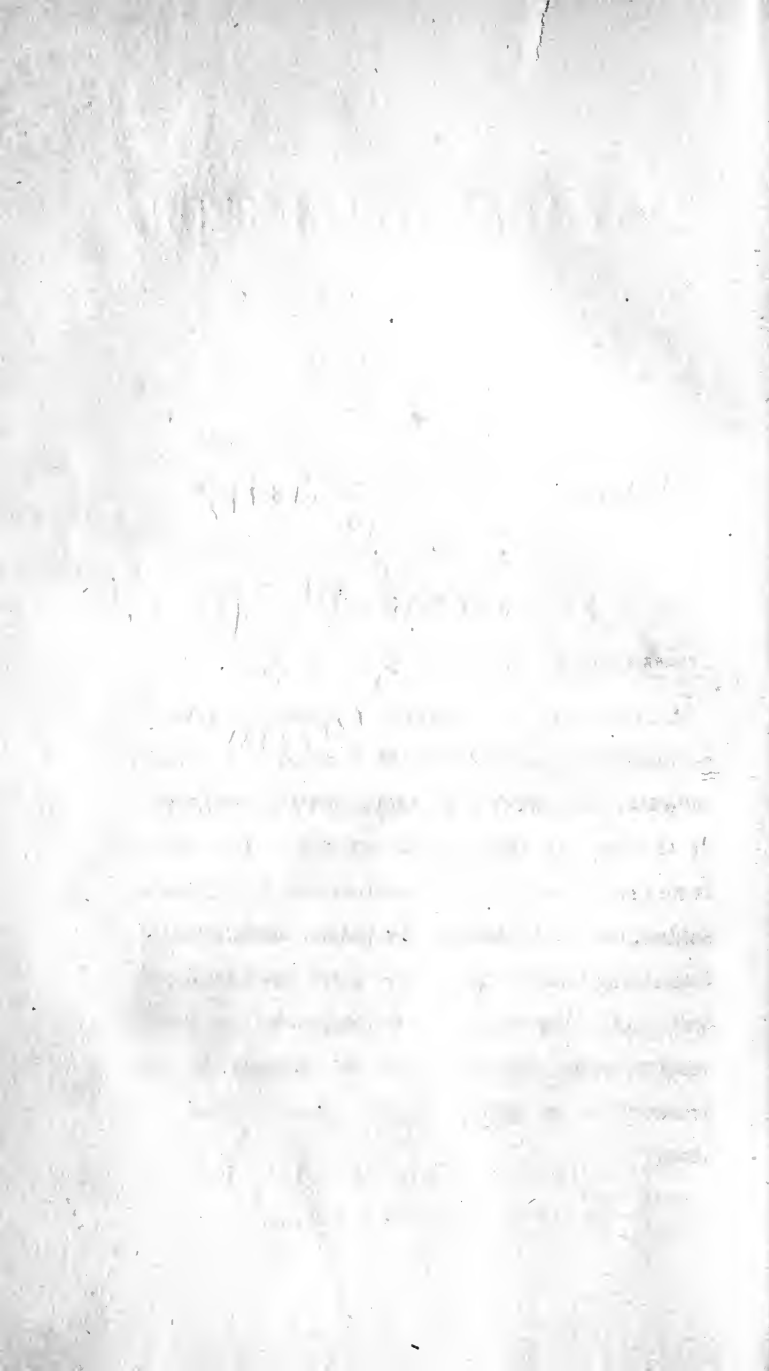
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MARY ANNE WELLINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE BATTLE FIELD OF TALAVERA.

A LETTER may not always be a pleasing prelude to an interesting chapter, but the heading of the page indicates the species of communication proposed at the end of the previous volume. The letter is an original one, and though written by a private soldier, one of the band of the gallant 48th, it exhibits strong traits of genius and much good sense ; it will not, therefore, be unacceptable to some readers, who can share in the feelings of the transcriber, in giving it the praise which it deserves.

It is written from the field of Talavera, and should the great warrior of that field read it, he will be surprised to find that so humble an individual in his ranks should possess so much ingenuity and perception, without ever attaining, or desiring to attain any remarkable notoriety. Singularly enough too, this first great battle, in which Sir Arthur Wellesley had more difficulties to contend with than in any previous or succeeding one, should have changed his own name to that of the heroine, to whom this letter is indicted. Wellington was the maiden name of the soldier's wife, to whom this letter was written from Talavera ; and it was that maiden's name, though conferred as a title, from the name of a place in the county of Somerset, which was raised to honour in the person of Sir Arthur Wellesley, created Baron Douro of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera, and of Wellington in the County of Somerset. But the letter ! the letter ! Inferior as such matter may be, it must divert, if not increase, the interest of the reader.

Talavera,

On the Banks of the Tagus.

July 29th, 1809.

“ My dear wife !

“ I am writing on Dan's drum, from the field of the most deadly battle we have fought since we left the Rock of Gibraltar. Old Dan is sitting on his knapsack, and wiping away the perspiration from his brow, and saying as I write—‘ God grant the letter may reach your wife ! Tell her,’ says he, ‘ to keep your scrawl along with my Chronicles.’ So, my dear, you must put this letter into the midst of Dan Long's Chronicles of the gallant 48th. My hand is so swollen with the duty I have just had to perform, namely the lifting of the wounded into the scantily supplied carts for their removal, that with some difficulty I trace my lines closely upon this paper. My mind is so carried back by past domestic concerns, and then so completely overturned by present conflicts, that you must forgive me if I write confusedly, and do not explain myself as I ought.

“ Since you left us, dearest wife, I have received two letters from Colchester, and glad in some measure I am, that they did not reach me before your departure for Old England; because I could not have urged your removal from scenes of terrific grandeur, and of most appalling difficulties, with the same effect I have done. My poor mother’s death would have destroyed my strength of argument for your journey. I am sure of one thing, that God has been merciful to you, in directing you to such a person as Mrs. Martin appears, by her letter, to be. And merciful indeed, has that good God been to me, that I am in health at this moment to write to you. Such scenes have I witnessed! Such trials have we all gone through that, comparatively speaking, one man’s narration thereof is but a bubble!

“ How shall I describe to you what we have gone through since we parted! I told you we should not be inactive, since the Spirit of Britain has come amongst us. We have not indeed been idle, our legs and arms have been pretty well employed;

when I tell you, that in the short space of three months we have traversed the length of Portugal, from Lisbon to Oporto, struggling through difficulties and dangers, which nothing but such wisdom as our General possesses could have conducted us through. We drove the French from the Estremadura into Galicia, and returned to head-quarters at Abrantes.

“ You can form no idea of the discipline and activity of our commander ! How delighted would Wellington your father be, to see how he orders every thing. He never directs a gun to be pointed without knowing exactly the effect it will have, the weight it will carry, and the consequences which must ensue from its direction. We all feel such confidence in his command, that we know our greatest safety is to do as we are bid. He never deceives us ! I dare not trust my brain to think of the movements of such masses as he directs, but I can see that when they do move, they fulfil the intentions of a master-mind, which does not build upon mere chance or individual bravery for success.

He projected such a plan of surprising the French at Oporto, as puzzled every one, but his own clear skull.

“ He moved his army towards the Douro. Night and day we were on the move, and arrived at the river, but not in time to cross it by the bridge, which was blown up about two o’clock in the morning, by the retreating enemy. Our regiment was one of the first which arrived on the banks, and the river was impassable without boats, and none appeared at hand! A poor Portuguese barber, with loyalty in his heart, and detestation of French treachery, came over to us, and hailing us as the true friends of his country, invited two or three of us to go over to the other side for some boats. Some barges were obtained through the influence of the barber, and though but a very few could pass at once, yet such was the unexpected attempt, that the enemy were not surprised until our gallant troops had assembled in some force in the very midst of the French army!

“ The first man wounded in this enterprize, was

the gallant leader of our brigade, General Paget, at the amputation of whose arm I had to assist; and nobly and without a sigh, did this firm man bear the operation. I shall never forget the placid composure of his countenance, as if he really suffered no pain.

“We were welcomed by the people of Oporto, as their deliverers!—No plundering was allowed. We had sharp work.—No prospect of prize money, though vessels were in the port laden with thousands of tuns of wine, and other property. The merchants of Oporto are a mean set! But if they are mean, the Spaniards are literally brutes, for I verily believe that, at the moment I am writing, after the hardest fight the 48th has ever had, they would here in Talavera, let us starve sooner than supply us with the necessaries of life. Money cannot procure bread. I wish Sir Arthur would just let them see that, if they will not supply us when we pay, they should be made to do so, without delay.

“But, hurrah! one of Dan’s staff has just re-

turned to him with some Spanish black bread, and I assure you, dear wife, that no school-boy ever enjoyed the sight of a plum-cake with half the ravishing delight that I do the thumping loaf Dan places on the head of his drum. I must jump up and eat, for we have been half starved these last four days. So before I begin the battle of Talavera I must have a cut at the best friend of poor mortality in the scenes of death—bread—made of Talavera wheat, which looks as if it had been kneaded with gunpowder and water!—But good, ay good it is, dear wife!—and the wine, though sour, is good also. So, as Dan says, ‘Here’s a health to those far away!’

“There! there! if ever I felt so near like a tipsy man, as I do now from taking bread and a little wine and water, I should think a very little more would make my head beat a strange tattoo upon the big drum. Bread after famishing, has as much effect upon me as if I had drank a strong glass of rum upon the Rock of Gibraltar. There’s many a man there that has felt less lively than I do, though his

potation has been three times as powerful. Fatigue, starvation and pain, are wonderfully allayed by a loaf of bread—and so I am off again to fight the battle of Talavera upon paper: ay, dear wife, the colour of my ink is neither red nor black, but a strange mixture of both; for, be it known to you that, so hot has been my pocket, that my ink was dried in its leathern case, and I had to fill it up out of a pool of mud, stained with the blood of horses and of men! Alas, dear wife! this is a bloody epistle! but thank God, it will reach you in a land of peace, and may He avert, ever avert from Old England the horrors of invasion.

“ But I must begin the description of the battle. First I must tell you the kind of friends and foes we have had to deal with. The Spaniards are exactly like their asses:—tall, stately, self-willed, stubborn and strong; will do nothing without being humoured, and make such a terrible braying upon the march, that you would think they would frighten their enemies out of the field! But then, when we look for the roaring of a lion, lo and behold it is the

braying of an ass. I happened to be waiting with a note upon General Hill before the battle, when who should come into our camp, but the old Spanish Commander, Cuesta. He came in a carriage drawn by six long-tailed black horses, from which he descended with more pomposity than if he had been King of Spain. Our active commander, Sir Arthur and he, were a living contrast.

“I could not hear their conversation ; but it appeared to me as if the cool sarcastic countenance of our brave hero, expressed the most vivid contempt for his ally. He stood in quiet dignity, biting his nether lip, with a determination to hear the pompous cadences of the Spanish ass with all the patience of Job, until all at once, as if he could stand it no longer, he unfolded his arms, and I heard him give his hands a smack, which made old Cuesta drop his ears and kick.

“I know not what might be the word, but it was very effective. The Spaniard retired, and Sir Arthur was as lively as a lark, though, with a hawk’s quick eye, he surveyed the field before him. The

Spaniards do not want for courage when fairly in a battle, and their cavalry are dashing fellows ; but they are easily smitten with panic, and, when once off, run like asses over the country.

“The French are as cautious as their leader. They walk like cats, and prowl like tigers : they watched old Cuesta for their spring, and had not our leader foreseen the cunning, and assisted the Spaniards, they would have been caught in a trap, and then been played with for a moment and killed. If you look at my letter T, it will give you an idea of the battle, only you must cut off the right hand branch ; then you will have an idea of two rivers, called the Tagus and the Alberche : and between these two rivers the fighting took place. The Tagus is the stem of the T, and the Alberche is the arm. The English and the Spanish were situated at the foot of the T, and the French came over the Alberche to meet us. Talavera was on our right, and our army drawn up on the side of a hill, overlooking the country between the Alberche and the Tagus at Talavera. It was dotted with woods and hills,

and on the noon of the 27th, looked as lovely and as pleasant as if it were a land of peace.

“ One of the 45th, who was brought to the rear, dreadfully wounded, told me that at three o’clock on the 27th, we were as near losing our General, as my pen is losing its ink ; for Sir Arthur was at an old castle in sight of the Alberche, and had scarcely time to get out of it, before the French were upon him. Had we lost him, we should have lost our footing on the Peninsula, if we did not every one of us lose our lives. Thank God ! we lost him not, and neither did we lose the battle. The brave 45th were the first to stem the torrent of the French advance, and the poor fellow whose limb I helped to bandage up, and who was wounded in the thigh, told me that the young troops gave way at first, till his regiment stood like a rock against the flood. The 45th and part of the 60th, under the immediate eye of Sir Arthur, cheered by his presence, checked the fury of the enemy.

“ But the battle came on, and the master mind had to watch the movements of an enemy twice his

number, and formed of long tried, hardy soldiers. I was close by Dan Long, and stood on the hill in the rear of our regiment. He, with his usual quick eye, pointed out to me the different positions of our line, and said, 'Depend upon it, we shall be among the first who are attacked this evening.' We heard a tremendous fire along the line, towards the town of Talavera, and presently afterwards the confusion of voices, but no reply to the firing : for the Spanish General's brave troops, after pouring in such a volley as was enough to appal the stoutest foe, themselves were frightened and ran away, leaving their artillery without horses, and the men only anxious to see who could get away the fastest.

" At the moment I am writing this, three regiments, the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th have come on to the battle ground, having pressed forward more than sixty miles to be present at the battle. Brave fellows ! they have come too late for the present struggle, but in time to relieve our fatigued and starving troops. The description they give of the flight of the Spaniards towards Oropesa, is the most

extraordinary. Some of them said they were informed, that the whole British army was beaten, and in full retreat; that it would soon be a death-flight, and that they had better not advance. Our brave soldiers, however, only pressed on the more eagerly, if possibly they might afford assistance to their countrymen. Their steady step was a disgrace to Spain. Britons fighting for Spanish liberty, and they betraying them into the hands of their enemy. But Sir Arthur retrieved the step, and even old Cuesta is reported to have been ashamed of his troops.

“ We were soon to receive our salute, as Dan said. We were in the act of receiving orders from General Hill, and our brave Colonel Donnellan was talking to him, when down came a volley upon us from the summit of the hill; and the General exclaimed, “ It must be our own men !” He rode forward with Major Fordyce, and was amidst foes instead of friends. Major Fordyce was cut down; but Hill, though his horse was wounded, spurred him down the hill, met the 29th, and gallantly led them up to the combat.

“Then came the night attack, and fearful was it by the flash of guns to witness faces within twenty yards of each other, firing by their gun-lights, at each other’s heads. Tremendous was the work our regiment had that night ; but we gained our position, and giving loud hurrahs, we were answered by our brave companions along the whole line.

“ On the left the firing ceased, and we began to light our bivouac fires, and to exchange the heat of day and of battle, for the heavy dews of night. As for me, I had no rest ; my office was to assist the wounded to the rear, and throughout that dreadful night, many a poor fellow resting on my arm, breathed his last, and lay upon the field. One young fellow, whom I was leading from the fray to our surgeon’s quarters, suddenly stopped, and looking at me earnestly said, ‘ If you live through the battle, send this letter as directed, and write on the back of it to my father, your boy died with no wounds in his back.’ He did die poor fellow, not three yards onwards from that spot.

“But the firing was silent, save some distant

shots among the Spaniards. Victory crowned no heads that night ; but I understand that nearly two thousand of my fellow creatures lay stretched upon the earth, never to rise again ! Oh ! that men could rejoice in the day of peace, at being free from war !

“ My dispatch, dear wife, is so long, that you will almost wish it were published ; but mind and put it with Dan’s Chronicle. I leave off, as Dan says, on purpose to begin again. I have given you a sketch of the 27th of July ; but as we say of an Oratorio, this was but an introduction to the great performance of the 28th.

“ At five o’clock in the morning, the dreadful work began again. It appeared to be the object of the enemy, to gain possession of the hill on the left ; and dreadful was the combat in that quarter. Our own regiment was held in reserve this day, and Sir Arthur, who stood upon the eminence close by us, gave us several opportunities of witnessing the conduct of the man, whose judgment was to fight the battle in his own mind, before he

made the troops advance to perform their duties. He is not a man of great stature, but of a very singularly sagacious countenance. There is a strange fancy always running in my mind, from what I read at school, that his face and figure resemble that of Alexander the Great, a hero of ancient day, of whom I dare say, you may have heard me speak, but of whom you know nothing. His countenance is as open as that of the brave eagle, which stands upon the summit of your native rock, and his composure is equal to that of this noble bird. His eyebrows are arched, almost like the arc of a circle, his nose is something more than aquiline, and his mouth is compressed, almost as closely and as rigidly as a muscle. His bearing is a personification of martial dignity and intellectual superiority. His smile is more in the eye than on the lip, for pleasure with him is the spirit of heroic deeds, and when a man does well under his eye, you may see it lighten up with the quickest admiration. I was so near him upon several occasions on the 28th, that I could read the man as he passed me.

“He was here, there, and everywhere, in spirit if not in person, and he looked as if he would have had wings to fly from one quarter to another, to head the columns of attack. I heard him give his orders to his aides-de-camp with such precision and intelligence, that none could mistake or misunderstand him.

“The fighting was terrific from five o’clock until nine, when literally both armies seemed to come to an agreement to halt. The French had gained nothing! The English lost nothing, save that which was common to both sides, viz. many a noble officer and brave soldier. The French artillery, and the British bayonet were the most destructive weapons of offence and defence. The sun was bearing a dreadful power upon us, and increasing our thirst to such a degree, that we required water, which could only be obtained at the risk of life.

“During a long pause in the work of slaughter, the men of both armies met at a little stream which ran near the centre of the battle, and met together

as friends, with one common desire, to satisfy a craving of nature, more urgent than the affairs of war. The British soldiers one side the stream, and the French on the other, filled their cans without any molestation of each other ; nay, with words of kindred sympathy for one another.

“ The Spaniards being nearer Talavera and the Tagus, and having little to do with the battle, did not suffer as we did. Half our band went to the stream for water about ten o'clock, and each returned, bearing for his thirsty companions under arms, the life-giving draught of refreshment ; many a poor wounded fellow did I that day receive a blessing from, when I held to his parched lips the anticipated cup.

“ It was a generous sight to see the armies, for a while, remaining quiet, and assisting to remove the wounded from that field over which they were so soon to pour again the volleys of destruction. That pause saved hundreds who would have been trampled to death. Enemies met as friends, and when the trumpet gave again the sound, to prepare

for battle, soldiers waved the hand of friendship to each other, and resumed their ranks as hostile as ever ! So strange are the incidents of war !

“The enemy, as if they had gained new life, began again the daring conflict. On the left and on the centre of our line, a simultaneous attack was conducted with such determined fury, that it seemed almost impossible to resist it. We remained firm, however, and in our turn we charged with fixed bayonets, the retiring foe. The 23rd horse were dreadfully cut up ; they charged the enemy, who stood upon the brink of a ravine, imperceptible upon the plain, and such was their headlong impetuosity, that they could not be restrained ; they rolled over in the stream, and many were carried away ; horses and their riders met a watery and a bloody grave, for the enemy’s infantry poured in volley upon volley into their broken ranks, and the few that formed on the opposite side had a very narrow escape.

“I am now going to tell you an event of which

I am not a little proud, for we received a personal command from our leader, which I verily believe was the master blow of the day. The Guards, under Sherbrooke, received an advance of the enemy at the point of the bayonet; but, finding that the French columns thought better of their intentions than to put their mettle to the test, they in their turn determined to give them a proof of their courage. They pursued them along the plain with such success, that they were carried in their ardour beyond the line of order; and not preserving that unbroken front which they had presented at the onset, the French reserve attacked them, and must have inevitably gained the day, but for the penetration of our great commander.

“He ordered the 48th down the hill, and Colonel Donnellan, at the head of our body, marched in admirable order to the attack. We gave Sir Arthur a cheer, and he waved his hand to us, and we each felt as if that hand strengthened our own. We seemed as if we were the right hand of the victory. With firm step, our colours flying and our

band playing, we moved on, well knowing every one of us that thousands were looking on. We met such a confused mass of the retreating centre, that but for the order to open file and let them pass, we should have been swept away. But Donnellan, brave Donnellan, waited for his men, and forming them again in a beautiful line of British rank, we received such an acclamatory Hurra from an Irish regiment, that it was taken up along the whole line, and we went into the battle determined to die or be victorious.

“We met the formidable enemy flushed with momentary success. We met them as men should meet a foe, with a resolution that intends to stand.

“We had a dreadful hand to hand engagement, for even the band had to fight in the ranks this day with their gallant companions, and I am happy to say I am to be a sergeant of that band, at least the Colonel tells me so. We were well supported by the return of the Guards and the German Legion. They had rallied behind us, and came on to prove, that if their ranks had been broken, their spirits were

undaunted. The French gave way, and retreated in admirable order. The battle soon began to slacken on the part of the French, and confidence, throughout the whole line of the British, to rise. Shouts of triumph told our enemies that Britons were ready to meet them in any field of battle.

“Just at this moment our successes were damped by a sight, such as harrowed up the minds of both armies. The sultry weather had so dried the grass, that the fire of our musketry had set it in a blaze, and it raged more fiercely than the enemy’s fire. The wounded were seen in frantic agony, rising up and falling down in the flame. Happy, happy they, whose bodies felt not this devouring scourge! Soldiers of all grades ran from the ranks, to carry out a wounded comrade who called for mercy, and individual acts of courage might be then seen, and men as magnanimous in saving life as they had been audacious in destroying it.

“Dan, your old friend Dan, had a glorious reward. A French officer with a shattered limb, rose up in the midst of the conflagration, and with

a heart-rending cry, and standing on one leg, he sent forth such a scream, '*Miséricorde! miséricorde!*' that Dan dropped his drum, rushed through the crackling grass, seized the officer, and jumping, literally jumping over the knots of flame, brought him to the rear of the 48th.

" 'Well done, Dan,' exclaimed the Colonel. 'I would make you a Colonel of the band this moment, if I could.' The Frenchman proved to be a person of some rank. He gave his name to Colonel Donnellan, and it was sent to General Hill. He must have been of some note, for a broken gun carriage, covered with a military cloak, was sent for him, and he was conveyed to the hospital at Talavera. Dan was sent for this very morning, and he was permitted to receive a remembrance from Count Rouille, which he says he will let you see whenever he shall see you again.

" We bivouacked on the field, the French retiring by slow and well-covered retreats, until every force was withdrawn; and, before this day, the 29th, on which I am writing, they have all crossed the

Alberche, and I do not think our Commander intends to pursue them. The worst news I can tell you is, our brave Colonel Donnellan is wounded, and will not submit to amputation. We all fear he will die ! We shall lose a dear friend as well as a brave Colonel.

“Thus, my dear, have I given you some account of our doings. Do not think for one moment, that I ever regret your absence from these horrible scenes. God knows I heartily wish the world was at peace, and men were contented to make the earth produce enough for us all. The sun never smiled on more beautiful fields, than I have seen in this country ; but surely death never frowned on more cruel scenes of desolation. You must not think that every soldier loves war. I do not believe our great General does. I believe that he feels himself a servant of God, his King, and his country, bound to do his duty to the best of his ability ; and I believe he will do it to the satisfaction of Great Britain, as long as he lives.

“Old Dan desires his love ! He promises to be

godfather by proxy for our first, and I believe the dear friend of our youth would be delighted to terminate his existence in some such peaceful place as Wellington cot, or Hewitt's cottage, at Gibraltar, Hingham, or in the Emerald Isle. My best respects to Mrs. Martin. A thousand thanks for her kindness to my poor dear mother; ten thousand thanks for her kindness to you, and, looking anxiously from Lisbon for a packet for the army of the Peninsula,

I remain

"Your affectionate husband,

"THOMAS HEWITT."

"To Mrs Hewitt,

"At Mrs. Martin's, Broker,

"Colchester."

The reader will perhaps think this letter sufficient for a chapter. It was read with eagerness by various classes in Colchester, and by none more than those friends of philanthropy, the Quakers of Colchester and Chelmsford, who agreed that it drew a vivid picture of the horrors of war.

CHAPTER II.

RESOLUTION AND REUNION.

THE receipt of the letter which gave such a painful description of the Battle of Talavera, did not destroy the intention which the soldier's wife had entertained of returning to her husband. On the contrary, it made her more anxious to be near him, that she might serve him to the best of her ability.

"I think I shall return to Portugal, Mrs. Martin," she at length said. "Friends are very kind to me here, I and am sure they wish me well, and you above all others have been a very dear friend to me. But, looking a little forward, I see that I must become depen-

dent upon the bounty of strangers if I stay here much longer, and I know my husband's wish will be that I should return, when he learns that I have lost my child."

"His letter does not seem to favour such an idea; on the contrary, he urges rather that you should be absent from his dangers, and rejoices in your being here with me. Do let me persuade you to remain."

"It is very good of you to ask me, and I feel sure that God will reward you for your goodness to me, a poor lone woman, little more than a girl. Yet I do not feel happy in the idea of years of separation from my husband. Every day I feel that I belong to him, and I wish to be near him. If he should be wounded, and no one near him, how should I then repent of not having gone to him. I do not mind privations, and somehow I think I might be able to procure something for the soldier's comfort which they could not procure for themselves. All things seem to invite me to join my husband; when I sleep, I dream of him; and when awake, I think of him; and I do

assure you my conscience will not let me rest, until I find out some means to embark for Portugal."

"But do wait, my dear, until you hear from him again. You ought to write and to have an answer from him, because there are many things he may suggest, which it is actually necessary for you to know previously to your departure. Your husband certainly seems a wonderful man; that letter speaks him one whose understanding is good, and his heart right. I should like to know him."

"God grant you may! for I can assure you that he is a clever, and a well-educated young man, and as good a husband as any woman ought to desire. He is much thought of in the regiment, and for so young a man, is considered the wisest among them. I never saw any one so quick at studying any subject he undertakes. I think it is his Bible that has given him this judgment beyond his years, for he delights to read it. He describes so well the characters he reads of that he makes them seem to be present with you. He is also a very shrewd judge of men."

“So he appears to be; Mrs. Hewitt, his mother, told me of his progress at school, and what pleasure his master took in him. I am sure you are a fortunate woman to meet with such a husband. Your poor mother-in-law told me the history of your mutual attachment.”

“Well now, can you wonder that I should sigh, when I feel myself so far away from such a man?”

“I do not wonder at that; but do you consider the dangers you have to go through, before you join the British army?”

“I considered all the hardships and dangers, before I married. My father is a soldier, my mother is a soldier’s wife and daughter, my kindred for ages back have been soldiers, and if I do not follow their example, what am I good for? I will write, dear Mrs. Martin, I will write and follow my letter in a week or two; for I am come to the resolution that it would be better for me to be reunited with my husband, than to remain here.”

It is not an easy thing to persuade persons to

forego their intentions, when all their inclinations and their ideas of duty to God and man are wound up with those intentions. To go, our young heroine was determined. She loved the good Mrs. Martin, she loved the reverend gentleman who had been so attentive to her in sickness, she loved the ladies who had been so friendly to her ; and the praises bestowed upon the letter of her husband made her love him so much the more, and so much the more did she desire to follow his fortunes in the camp.

Who should say " nay," when the heart and understanding utter " yea." She wrote to her husband as she promised, but her friends persuaded her to wait until she heard from him again. She had taken a fixed resolution to depart, if, in one month from posting her letter, she did not get an answer. But the day before her intended departure she received the following letter.

Camp, Badajos,

August 30th, 1809.

" My dear Wife,

" I have got your letter. Alas, for our loss at home ! Talavera is lost too. We have retreated

to Badajos. We have been half starved—half do I say? some of us completely so; and yet, when we left Talavera and the French gained it, they found enough for their army for months to come. Never, in the history of wars, will Spanish cruelty and ingratitude be forgotten. If ever the British nation shall thoroughly understand the manner in which British soldiers have been treated by the Spaniards, they will bitterly repent the blood spilt for a people who have not the humanity of savages. Wild savages would weep over the sufferings of a deliverer, but these cold-blooded rascals will treat our Commander's requests with disdain, and swear that his soldiers are banquetting on the fat of the land, when they are literally starving. To see their cowardice, their beastly brutality, and abominable selfishness and inhumanity, is enough to make us wish they were our enemies instead of pretended allies.

“At our retreat from Talavera, I had to assist in the care of the wounded. The Spanish General would let us have but seven carts to move two

thousand wounded comrades, who had bled for their safety. Oh, that Sir Arthur had suffered us to seize that to which we were justly entitled ! Did the Spanish General care for us ? not he ! Starving, dying, we might fight, but he would have the glory ; and what is worse we could see all these things and were compelled to be passive. Say not, ye chroniclers, that the English cannot fight without their bellies full ! Many thousands had to stand the heat of Talavera with an empty stomach, and, after winning the battle, to meet with the most cruel neglect.

“ Sir Arthur’s humanity at the retreat from Talavera to Badajos, will, as long as any soldiers of the 48th shall live, never fail to appear to them the brightest action of his life. He was, as a good general, determined to help his own people who could not help themselves ; and he would not leave Talavera until he saw the wounded carried out before his army—as many at least as forty carriages would hold, and we placed in a position to defend them. Whilst we execrated the Spaniards in our hearts, out of deference to our Commander we

forebore vengeance ; but many of us could scarcely keep our hands from their destruction.

“The French, our enemies, have more pity upon our wounded, than the Spaniards for whom we fought. Those men whom we were compelled to leave behind, from being unable to carry them forward, on account of our having no conveyance for them, were treated with the kindest sympathy by Victor, the French General. A poor fellow who escaped to Badajos after the French entered it, tells us, that he would not suffer a single man in his army to receive his rations, until every wounded man, and the British first, and then the Frenchmen, had received nourishment. The French know how to treat these scoundrels. They give an order to the Alcalde. If not done, he is soon done up. Alas ! Mary, Colonel Donnellan is dead ! A gentleman ! a soldier ! and a christian !

“The old Spanish General Cuesta is a murderer, and not a warrior ! And what do you think of our living and fighting for such villains ! He has ordered forty or fifty of his own soldiers to be shot, and

would have gone on shooting them, on account of their doing as he himself did, flying from the field of battle, if our Commander had not told him he would not permit it. We are, however, out of his way, and have parted company with him, and I hear he is to be degraded. Time he should be, for we are in a most woeful plight, more through Spanish infidelity than from French rapacity. We are half of us ill. Our own brave fellows, are, it is true, in the best fighting order at this moment ; but even we are miserable. *We*, who are tolerably well ought not to complain, for all are suffering hardships. The offal of a hog sells now dearer than did two whole carcasses two months ago. We are compelled to rob the peasantry of their swine, because we have no means of getting meat supplied to us. The very foraging parties of our Generals are fired upon by our allies !

“ And yet, dear wife, you wish to come to such a country as this, and call me cruel, for putting in a nay upon the occasion. I do not doubt your con-

stancy, and I am delighted to find you have so many friends. Your letter reveals to me your heart, and so well does it respond to my own, that I would gladly say come, if it were as easy to do it as to say it. Dear old Dan is daily my delight, drum never dumb ; derrying down, he is always dunning ; his drumsticks, he says, are damped ; and could he get a Norfolk damper of a dumpling for his dinner, he'd kick up such a din, as would damage even the deafness of his drum. But what do you think of him for a diversion ? He has just now said, 'Do not deny my daughter. Dear she deserves to be. Daunt her not, if she dare to come. Determined are her designs, and no denial will divert her ; daring, dauntless, demanding, you durst not drive her to despair. Deceive her not, degrade her not ; dangers deter her not ! do not then deteriorate her disposition ; but with dispatch, let her take her departure, and Dan will be her Dan.' So do not delay, my dear, but do as Dan directs, and let the letter D tell you Dan's delight ; for he says you are his darling,

and he will be your defender, and so will your self-denying, devoted drummer,

“THOMAS HEWITT.

“ To Mrs. Hewitt,

“ At Mrs. Martin's, Broker,

“ Colchester, England.”

As may be supposed, this letter did not a little please our heroine.

“ Consent! consent!” she exclaimed to Mrs. Martin, “I have got his consent, and I do not see now, where the obstacles can be to hinder my going.”

The good soul read Hewitt's letter, and not overjoyed at it, as was the young wife, she most piously wished that it might be for her happiness, and did not attempt to prevent her going.

True love has the widest wings that were ever spread; not only the widest, but the strongest. Expanded, they fill all space, and seem to cover with their feathers all the stars of heaven. True love, faithful, fearless, and hopeful, is not to be dismayed by any opponent. What are Russian steppes, Spanish

mountains, African deserts, northern snows, eastern suns, southern gales, or western prairies, to the resolution of true love ? There are no toils which love cannot endure ; there are no dangers which she cannot surmount ; there are no difficulties she cannot conquer. Death she defies ; life she lengthens ; duration she makes indefinite ; and after all, she does as she would be done by, and must be dear to every one.

So reader, the heroine of this tale, which is true, departed from Colchester, destined to encounter many a severe trial, but ultimately to outlive them all, and in a good old age to make a declaration of her thankfulness to thee, for the kindness of thy decision in her favour.

She bade her benefactress farewell. She reached Portsmouth, and found a vessel bound for Portugal. Her ideas did not comprehend distances ; and instead of Lisbon, she arrived at Oporto, and had to seek her husband in that country of contention. She gained no inconsiderable portion of respect on board the Neptune ; she had shewn the Captain her letters,

and he was so struck with their simplicity and with the earnest warmth of devotion which the young wife displayed, that he would not suffer her to go on shore until he himself had been, and found her a place of security.

“Your husband is not near Oporto, and you will have a long, dangerous, and tedious march before you can reach him. I cannot find a vessel bound for Lisbon, or I would persuade you to go to that port. I have found a Frenchman, named Alberry, who married an Irishwoman, and who is willing to take care of you until an opportunity shall occur for your journeying to join the British army. But do not attempt to travel in this country, without a guide and a guard. Your husband is either at Abrantes or at Badajos; and two hundred miles without a guide in a strange country, whose language you do not understand, would be too much, even for your undaunted spirit to undertake. Remain, therefore, with the friends I have provided for you, until some safe conductor can be found to convey you to harbour.”

The young soldier's wife did as she was advised, and found good friends in Alberry and his wife. She remained with them for six weeks, before any one could be found to help her on. Her impatience received a severe check in this long delay, after arriving in the country where the army was ; but Alberry, who was town serjeant-major at Oporto, did not cease to make inquiries for a good conductor.

"My husband," said his wife, at length, "has found a friend in whom he can confide. A comrade of his own in the 97th, a serjeant Yarmy, and his wife, are going to join the army at Viseu : what say you to going with them ?"

"Say, why that I am ready to start this instant, let him travel how he will. But I cannot go without giving you both the most grateful thanks for all your kindness."

"You are welcome, very welcome, and, could we have found a fit companion for you, we would have forwarded you sooner. My husband says that your own ought to publish his letters,

they so exactly describe the scenes of the battle."

Serjeant Yarmy was in the German legion. He had married an Englishwoman, who followed his fortunes, even to the memorable battle of Waterloo. They were twelve days journeying from Oporto to Abrantes. It was at first their hope that the 48th might be at Viseu; but there they learned that General Hill's division was at Abrantes. At Viseu, her kind friend Yarmy had to leave her. She will never forget that man's kindness; he not only protected her thus far, but, through the aid of a Portuguese priest, he obtained for her guide a muleteer of such a character for steadiness and honesty, that she could confidently trust herself in his hands. She had to pay this man a dollar a day; but each day she paid it with increased satisfaction, as he brought her nearer to her husband. When she arrived at Abrantes, she met with another disappointment; for, though her regiment was there, yet her husband was not; he, with part of the 48th was then at Portalègre, in charge of some sick and

wounded who were left to recruit their strength before they rejoined the regiment.

Colonel Duckworth, however, was there, and when he heard that Mary Anne Hewitt, whom he knew as Mary Anne Wellington, upon the rock of Gibraltar, had arrived at Abrantes in search of her husband, he soon found her an escort to Portalègre, which gave her infinite delight.

Her old friend Dan Long was ordered to take charge of her.

When she saw him, in spite of the presence of the Colonel, she ran to him with childish delight, and the veteran received her with open arms. Had he been her own father, greater regard could scarcely have been felt than was displayed in the warm friendship which this good man entertained for her.

“What! come to camp are you? Come to camp at last! Oh that I could bid the band play its merriest tune to welcome the soldier’s wife into the heart of the 48th. I thank you, Colonel, for placing this precious charge under my care. Your

honour does me an honour I shall not easily forget, for my friend's joys are my own, and I think your honour will have made three of the happiest beings in the regiment; bless your honour's heart for your kindness!"

He was a hearty old fellow, was Dan; inexpressible pleasure was visible in his countenance, for he looked the very picture of joy, as he held the young wife of his friend in his arms and thanked God for her safety. Politeness, native politeness, is the offspring of a generous heart, more than of any studied form or fashion of the world. It will be found sometimes under a rough exterior, but it is always gentle in its actions; never more so than in offering protection to helpless age, defenceless woman, or confiding infancy. Shew me a man whose heart is always ready to obey the summons to such duties, and whether he shall grace the saloons of London, Paris, or Rome, or dwell in some of the almost impenetrable passes of the upper Nile, I shall hold him to possess the true virtues of politeness, and to be worthy of the name of gentleman.

In everything but formal fashion and wealth, Dan was a gentleman. In his feelings he was generous, in his dealings upright, in his doings he was praiseworthy, and in the conduct of his band, nothing could have given a better account of the native vigour of the mind, than the good behaviour which his generalship produced. It was his office too often to see soldiers punished ; but, throughout the campaign, no drummer's boy of the 48th ever came under the lash.

But, hurrah, for Dan's present happiness and politeness ! As we often find in life our own anticipated enjoyments the best and purest pleasures, when we view them innocently, so the thought of making another happy is, if anything, greater than any prospect we can promise to ourselves. Did not Dan, when he took charge of his young comrade's wife, think of her father, Wellington, and of his promise to him ; and was there not a joy in fulfilling it beyond any selfish gratification of the soul ? Did he not think of the pleasure of surprise to the young soldier, and of the delight of the

young soldier's wife? He did indeed! and as he led the mule upon which she rode, neither Don Quixotte nor his squire Sancho were ever elevated with half the romance of devotion to the sex, that Dan honestly and sincerely owned, in this journey from Abrantes to Portalègre.

They had enough to talk of, both in prospect and retrospect.

"Dan," said the soldier's wife, "do you remember the promise which you gave, that I should see the present which the French Count made you after the Battle of Talavera?"

"And so you shall, my dear, and here it is; and if you like a pinch of snuff out of it, or would like to see a charming face under the lid, there you have it."

With that, Dan presented to his fair friend a gold snuff-box, with the portrait of a very beautiful female under the lid, enough to tempt any man to take snuff, if only for the pleasure of looking at the features of that face.

"What an elegant box, Dan! And is it real gold?"

“Indeed it is! and I promised to keep it in remembrance of the giver. He says, if I survive the war, and bring that box to France, he will redeem it at a great price. I am sure I am not worthy of it. The young man is one of the French noblesse, and thought that he could never do too much for me. Now I did no more than many others did in that devastating fire; but I chanced to save a man who had not only the title, but the heart of a nobleman.”

“God grant you may live to see each other again.”

“I do not like to let it be known that I have such a valuable box about me, lest I should be plundered; and therefore I shall gladly commit it to your care, when I see you happily located with your husband.”

“Now, Dan, you touch upon a subject which fills me with anxiety. How has my husband conducted himself through the campaign?”

“As an honest soldier ought, with skill and obedience, contentment, and firmness, courage, and discipline. He has had but one severe struggle yet, and

that was at Talavera. He has had duty enough in attending upon the safe custody of the wounded. He saw I believe the French Count, and is the only one besides yourself, who knows of this handsome present and its purport. The young man told me, that if ever he returned to France and recovered the use of his limbs, he expected to marry the lady whose face you see there; and that he should be proud to introduce his deliverer to his wife."

"That would be a happy day for you, Dan, I know. Would it not?"

"It would be a happy day to me, to see others happy: and could I but see these beautiful valleys through which we are passing, blessed with peace, as they are crowned with plenty, it would be indeed a happiness. War is a dreadful plague—a curse at any time; but war where all is smiling around you, and mountains, and hills, and valleys, and meads, are looking like domestic happiness, makes a contrast and change, which it is frightful to contemplate. You will see enough, before long, to make you wish yourself back again in England."

“Not if you and my husband be not there. War is bad, bad at any time ; but with the actual cause of war, soldiers have nothing to do. They are but the instruments in the hands of the directors ; and if those whom they are to protect require the sword to be drawn, the government must answer to God for the evil or the good done.”

“You talk like a philosopher in petticoats ; and if half the world did but view the responsibility in the same light, we should soon enjoy a general peace.”

They were then travelling through the loveliest scenes of Portugal—vineyards, and oliveyards—orange trees filling the air with perfume—all nature smiling in the glowing tints of a bright season—and drawing near to Portalègre, where each expected to find happiness in the joy of the other. Oh ! that such a country and such hearts should ever be desolate ! They entered the town, just as a long procession of priests were coming out, attendants on the festival ceremony of their favourite saint ; and, seeing Dan and his daughter, as they con-

cluded her, coming into the town, they stopped them to inquire if they were christians.

“What country are ye from?” asked the padre.

“We are Irish,” was the quick reply.

“Then ye are not heretics but christians, ye are not heretics, but of the true church ; pass on, pass on, and God speed you wheresoever ye go !”

It is quite true that, throughout the length and breadth of Portugal, all the Irish were considered Christians, and the wounded had many kindnesses shewn to them in their dying hours, on account of their being considered within the pale of christianity ; while an Englishman was looked upon as a heathen, let his manners, his devotion, or his conduct, be what they would. Our heroine, on account of her Irish extraction, had many favours shewn to her, though she was born, bred, and brought up a protestant of the United Church of England and Ireland.

They arrived in safety at the hospital, and Dan found, upon inquiry, that Hewitt was then on duty, so he placed his charge in the safe keeping of a comrade of his own regiment, and went in search

of him. He found him preparing to remove some of the wounded, who had been pronounced to be in health sufficient to join the camp again, and receiving his orders from the surgeon for their removal. Mules and muleteers were ready for the starting, and Hewitt had then asked if he were to accompany the party. Dan arrived just in time to say that he had orders from the Colonel, to take charge of any party that might be ready to go to Abrantes.

“So, Thomas Hewitt, you may stay where you are.”

“What, Dan! is that you? and is that your order, and must I now remain another month before a second party shall be strong enough to move? Oh, how I wish you had not come to supersede me!”

“And why so, you bad piece of harmony? what think you should bring Dan Long from the 48th, but urgent business? So now remain thankful at Portalègre!”

“You know, Dan, the reason I am so anxious to join my regiment.”

"I know you will not be so anxious to do that as you seem to be. Which would you rather do at this moment, join your regiment or your wife?"

This was a question, which in one moment changed all young Hewitt's manœuvres. He saw by Dan's eye that he had got some good news for him; and, regardless of the presence of the surgeons and the sick, the muleteers and the long ears of the mules, with their bells and trappings, he exclaimed: "Is my wife come? Is my wife come?"

The whole company burst into a laugh, as Dan replied: "Most noble soldier, just now so anxious to join thy regiment, wilt thou permit me to take thy place, and wilt thou go and take mine? I have conducted thy wife into the town in health and safety, shall I remain with her, or wilt thou for one month longer wait upon the sick?"

This was said with such playful gravity that even Hewitt scarcely knew how to think Dan's intelligence correct. He knew, however, that he would not mock him. He was overjoyed, poor fellow, and was pardoned by all for betraying those honest

raptures of the heart, which the best nature of man could alone appreciate.

He was soon in the company of her he loved ; and, gentle reader, neither you nor I will ever think that the young soldier had any objection to let Dan depart for head-quarters, which he did, leaving the soldier's wife to be rewarded for her long and toilsome march, by the reunion with her natural protector, from whom she was never again willingly separated till death dissolved the bond and left her a widow ; and then, as now, she bowed to the will of God.

CHAPTER III.

BUSACO.

NEVER were the affairs of the Peninsula in a more disorganized state, than in the latter months of the year 1809, and the beginning of 1810. Never was Lord Wellington in a more critical position. Confident in his own mind, whilst all exterior circumstances seemed to convince others, and to confirm their opinions against him, he was sure that Portugal might be defended, though Buonaparte should now turn all his energies from Austria to drive the "leopard," as he termed the English, into the sea. At home, a powerful oppo-

sition was stirring against the British General. The Government was weaker than ever in numbers, but it shone conspicuous in energy, and if not supported by large majorities within the House, it carried with it the voice of the nation against the great disturber of the world.

England beheld the pusillanimity of the grand boaster of liberty, the vaunted lover of morality and freedom, the gigantic Lilliputian Ruler of France, setting aside his amiable partner Josephine, to take unto himself, in the sight of all Europe, the daughter of Austria, to establish his own security upon the throne of France. The eyes of all honourable men were open to the violence and injustice of this alliance. Frenchwomen thought themselves insulted by this degradation of one of the most virtuous and amiable of their sex, in being put aside for mere political expediency. But when did such motives ever prosper against true love? Napoleon lost more by this one manœuvre, in the eyes of his own nation and in the favour of every sincere lover of constancy, than he ever gained by the

conquests of countries. His greatest friends now saw that his ambition was without principle, that a Napoleon dynasty must be established by French deterioration, and that the man who boasted himself the despiser of all the time-worn, honourable crowns of Europe, was only anxious to have one placed upon his own brow, from generation to generation. "Bah! bah! bah!" was the emphatic exclamation of disgust from thousands who once admired the man as well as his talents; now those alone who loved the sword and worshipped military glory, clung with devotion to the man whose overgrown pride, having taken its highest step, was to be overturned.

Never did Spain so fearfully tremble as at this time. Her pride was shaken, but her prudence could no where be found. Her daring of external dignity was just as great as in the days when she conquered Mexico; but her rulers had no wisdom. With a people capable of resistance to death against the tyranny of France, she exhibited such a spirit of endurance as struck the world with admiration,

whilst the fate of her people was deplored. Such instances as those of Zaragossa and Gerona, afforded convincing proofs of bravery, determination, resignation, and devotion in behalf of their liberties, as were scarcely ever more nobly displayed by any people. But what was individual bravery capable of performing against the united masses of a well disciplined force? Spaniards were too proud to permit the superior direction of military tactics by any other generals than their own. Wellington could not command their co-operation with him, and he saw that it would be the utmost folly to trust the fortune of the British arms to Spanish misdirection.

In vain did our Ambassador represent to the Junta, the folly of letting national pride stand in the place of national deliverance. Mr. Frere, conscious of the necessity of the combined efforts of England, Spain and Portugal, to foil the power of the usurper, and at the same time equally conscious of the superior military talents of the British-General, did all that man could do, to convince the Junta of the

necessity of acting under the direction of Wellington. Frere was a man, in whom patriotism and humanity were the honourable motives of all his diplomatic proceedings. No man loved or honoured his own country more than he did, or was placed in a more harassing and responsible situation than he was. No man knew Spain better, and none was there from England in whom suspicious and proud Spaniards had more confidence. At the time that he was at Madrid, he was an Englishman in wisdom, and felt and acted as such, notwithstanding all that violence of passion and misrepresentation raised against him. After all, England never found a man who could better direct Spanish counsels, with ability and honesty, than he did. He felt for Spain, he recommended the removal of Cuesta from the command of her army, and when he himself was *pro tempore* removed, like a good, generous, and upright man, he still did everything he could to promote the liberation of Spain from the dominion of the oppressor. He furnished Lord Wellington with a most important assistance in all

his operations ; namely, the most accurate maps of the whole country, obtained by his own indefatigable exertion and at his own expense, without which even Wellington might have been at a loss how to act. This the great General acknowledged ; and he safely returned to the ambassador those maps, wherein the plans of the campaigns were first considered, before the gigantic operations were performed, with all his notes, observations, and private marks upon them.

But even Mr. Frere, beloved as he was by Spaniards of all ranks, could not prevail against the stately folly of Spanish pride. Hence they were defeated battle after battle, but never subdued. They could not keep the field for any length of time, because in the very moment after victory, they would be smitten with a panic, and cast away their accoutrements and fly. From every open plain the Spanish armies were driven, yet their artillery was faultless, their cavalry well mounted, their troops well fed, and their allies neglected. They wanted a head, they wanted discipline and guidance, for

they were unskilled in the art of united exertion, and threw away their individual valour, because they had no confidence in their superiors. The Junta was obliged to retire from Seville to Cadiz, and nothing but the speed and energy of Albuquerque could save that city and the patriotic assembly from destruction.

Lord Wellington had disposed his troops for the defence of the Portuguese frontier, and awaited an opportunity to act in the common cause. At this time, the spirit of Spain was roused to a new species of warfare, consequent upon the inability of rulers and generals. The people formed armed bands called guerillas, headed by favourite leaders, of their own choice, no matter whether priest or layman, and exhibited such a formidable irritation against the invaders, that they found it impossible to keep up a communication with their own posts without employing strong military escorts to defend their couriers or supplies.

These bands of predatory soldiers, like the troops of banditti in Italy, lived in the fastnesses of the

mountains. They cut off all stragglers, attacked the convoys, plundered the ammunition stores, and in every possible way annoyed the great armies of the invader, without, at any time, affording him opportunity for a battle.

These people did more towards the liberation of their country, than did the efforts of their regular troops. They became formidable both to friends and foes. They were not over nice whom they attacked. They lived by plunder, and sometimes they were driven to the necessity of stopping even the convoy of provisions and pay, for the Spanish troops. The voice and arms of the people were with them, and they rose to commit daring exploits, and in many cases, most barbarous cruelties. Yet they carried along with them high characteristics of the old Spanish politeness and formal courtesy; and, when robbing any but Frenchmen, they would most politely doff their broad Spanish hat, and perhaps return a portion of their booty, especially if they found the sufferers not disposed to give them the trouble to be outrageous. A Frenchman, on the

contrary, they never spared, nor did the French spare them. The high trees along the roads, the most conspicuous places on the mountains—nay, the borders of the rivers, bridges, and fords, exhibited melancholy proofs of the most diabolical vengeance.

Reader, you will be glad to turn from these public scenes of political hatred, and private animosity, to the quiet duties of the hospital in which our heroine, young as she was, became celebrated for the aptitude she displayed for smoothing a brave soldier's pillow, and giving comfort to his wounded spirit. Hewitt and his wife were almost as expert dressers as the students of St. Bartholomew's, or of the London and Middlesex hospitals.

After the publication of these pages, I expect that I shall receive many a letter, which this brave young fellow wrote to the relatives of the wounded, then recovering from fever, starvation, and fractures, in the English camp. And if they could have written themselves, they would have spoken most emphatically of our heroine, of whom of course, her husband

could not make particular mention ; highly he might and did appreciate her honourable services.

Lord Hill and his division advanced to Portalègre, with the hope of cutting off some of the enemies of Romana, and of giving support to that General, who, on learning the state of affairs in Spain, had brought back from Denmark a division of the army, which Napoleon had artfully caused to be removed to that distant country. Thus the men of the 48th were again brought together, and Dan had the pleasure of seeing Hewitt and his wife charitably employed in duties for which they were peculiarly adapted. Hewitt's intelligence, and our heroine's humanity, were founded upon the strong religious basis of faith and duty. Inferior as was their station in the British army, we shall find that they commanded the attention of the highest and noblest in its ranks, both for their activity, honesty, and unflinching, undeviating sense of duty, to God and man.

It is well, indeed, that amidst the scenes of savage warfare, there should be some gentle spirit capable of giving comfort in attendance upon the sick. Sur-

geons do not at such times, and cannot perhaps, have that gentleness, which the more polite of the profession exhibit in a lady's sick room, or elegant boudoir. An expert operator, a skilful prober, or gentle dresser of wounds, is all that is expected in a military surgeon or his assistant : but should these pages meet the eye of the ever-active Stevenson, or his assistant Macauley, of the fighting 48th, they would bear testimony to the confidence which they reposed, in numerous instances, in the care and attention of our heroine and her husband.

“We must be off again, Hewitt ;” said Dan, “and now, my brave fellow, that our General is, I hear, retreating, and commanding the country to be desolated, you may expect he is up to something. I hate to hear all this croaking about Lisbon, and the ships in the Tagus ; this desponding about perils and dangers. When did Wellington—for so now we must call him—and I know you love the name, when did he ever flinch from his guns ? I would as soon believe that the brave fellow on the Rock of Gibraltar, whose

name you are so proud of, would suppose that he might see the guns he directed silenced from the Spanish lines, as that his name-sake, our General, expects to be driven into the sea. Confidence ; confidence in the head, becomes every man who occupies station in the ranks. Without a head, and a head like his, we should soon be like the Spanish armies, incapable of meeting the foe. But have you heard the news ?”

“ No, I have not ! So completely have I been occupied in the duties here appointed me, that I have not heard the reports of martial movements.”

“ You mean to say also, that you have been so occupied with your domestic happiness, that you have half forgotten the hardships of the camp ?”

“ No I have not ; but, Dan, I tell you in truth, I have found so much real satisfaction in attending upon the wounded, that, but for the love I bear you, old fellow, and the constant pleasure I feel in serving under you, I could almost wish my ser-

vices confined to the hospital staff, throughout the war."

"For that I thank you; and I only hope we may always be good company for each other as long as we live. But we are ordered to join the Commander-in-chief, and the whole of Hill's division is to cross the Tagus again, leave Abrantes, and draw closer to the centre. You have long ago heard of the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo; the masterly retiring of General Craufurd's division, and alas! the fall of Almeida, by the bursting of the bomb-proof magazines?"

"I heard of these things; but what immediate news have you, Dan?"

"Why, that we must be off immediately, unless the 48th are to remain in the rear; and that we shall know when we reach our lines. The best thing that we have ever done is, to be rid of the Spaniards, and to be dependent upon our own resources. We are now moved by steady marches, without fatigue, and, though like a lion bayed by a pack of wild dogs, we may retire before their barking, yet just let them

come 'near enough to attack our Commander in position, and he will soon shew them his teeth. I have full confidence in whatever he does ; and it will be time for us to think our case hopeless, when he orders us on board the transports off Lisbon. I believe he would see every man of his army on board, before he would leave Portugal, and then would leave it with regret. Go, and tell your wife that if she wishes to go with you, she must pack up her traps, tie up her sandals, and carry all she can upon her back."

"She may do that if she likes it best, Dan ; but I have wherewithal to provide her a mule, and a Portuguese boy to lead it ; and, now and then, with your permission, I shall look after lad and lady. I know she will be ready."

Ready was she, and with cheerful heart, and confident hope in God, she mounted the mule provided, which carried many a necessary article of medical provision in the panniers, and followed the camp to the field of battle.

"What a fine specimen of a British soldier's wife

you are, my daughter. I should like to see some limner taking a sketch of you," said Dan ; " as you now sit. You want nothing but a pair of wings to make you look like an angel."

"For shame, you old flatterer ! for shame ! An angel on a mule's back, with a pair of wings covering these panniers, would be a pretty picture to hang up in the parlour of some country village now, in Norfolk. You make me think it would be a good sign, Dan, for an Angel Inn, and underneath it might be written, 'Daniel Long. Good accommodation for man and beast !' "

"I'll tell you what, Hewitt, your wife, who has only heard you talk about Norfolk, Norwich, and Hingham, has not been to England for nothing ; her wit is sharper than my wisdom."

"That's only because you flatter her, Dan. If you spoil her, I shall have her eternally praising you, until she makes me jealous ; but who comes here?"

"It is a courier bearing some dispatches from Wellington. No, it is a Lisbon post, with news from England. Ay, he delivers a bag for the 48th."

When the regiments halted, the letters were

delivered, and there was one directed for Dan Long, or Thomas Hewitt of the band of the 48th. It was opened on the spot. It was from the Spanish Commandant at Cadiz; it was very short and very painful, and gave a severe blow to our heroine and her friends.

“ Cadiz : September 9th, 1810.

“ Sir,

“ I am directed to inform you of the death of George Wellington, of the British Artillery employed at Cadiz. He was wounded by a French shot from the heights, when engaged with the British sailors in extricating a ship from the fire of the French batteries. He was brought in here, in a sinking state, and expressed a strong desire that you should inform his daughter that his last dying prayer was for hers and your safety, which wish I have now fulfilled, one hour after his departure from this life.

“ And I remain,

“ Sir,

“ Your humble servant,

“ D. ANTONIO ALBERTE,

“ Secretary to the Commandant at Cadiz.”

Here then, at the moment of first marching with her husband to battle, did our young heroine receive intelligence of her fond father's death. The tears that fell were mingled with ominous forebodings for her husband and his friend; but faith and hope came to her help, as she spoke of her father lovingly, in the bitterness of her heart.

"I shall never see him more! never till the great trumpet of eternal victory shall sound, and then God grant it may be with joy."

"Amen! my dear," said Dan. "Sure a better soldier, and a better christian, and a better father there was not in his Majesty's service. Oh! what a comfort it is, my dear, to feel that he was prepared, by long trials of obedience, for the soldier's rest! I was always happy in his company. He was always so thoughtful, so steady, and so truly pious, that one of his sentences was like a proverb when delivered, it contained so much solid truth. 'Duty! do your duty! Be steady and content! Violate no law! Speak the truth! Never be afraid! Deceive no one! Libel no man! Relieve distress

with promptitude ! Never delay doing it, lest another take the honour from you ! Always work ! Do something ! Do not talk, but think and act ! Fear God and keep his commandments, and you may set Napoleon at defiance ! ”

“ Dan, dear Dan, you must be a good man, or you would never so treasure up my poor father’s maxims, and comfort his daughter. Is he not a good old fellow, Hewitt ? ”

“ Now don’t say a word about me, Hewitt ; comfort your wife, she must feel this a great blow just at this moment. There is no pleasure without pain. A moment ago we were all fun ; how soon do the clouds hide the sky and weep upon the earth ; and yet the tears water it, and do it good, soften the soil, and make it bring forth fruit. So do tears soften the soul of man, and bring him down from his too buoyant state of joy on earth, to think of his future state. ”

Old Dan and his companion held a long and oft renewed conversation upon the uncertainty of a soldier’s life, and upon the folly of ever delaying

repentance, and exercising faith in God. Some scenes, as well as some sufferings, will produce such reflections, and never were they more forcibly called forth than when, upon the heights of Busaco, on the 26th of September, 1810, General Hill's division joined Lord Wellington, and every soldier saw before him the advancing columns of Massena's hosts. It was the first time that our young heroine had ever beheld the British army assembled before a foe, the first time that she had ever seen the French army; and truly never were two armies beheld to greater advantage than at that moment. She would not have seen the enemy at all, had not the regiment arrived late on the evening of the 25th; and she would not part with her husband, but remained in bivouac upon the ground, resting her head upon a soldier's knapsack, and guarded by Dan and Hewitt through the dangers of the night.

The morning of the 26th broke in lovely grandeur upon the most magnificent scenery in Portugal. Dan awoke the young heroine, and called her atten-

tion to the positions of the English and their enemies.

“Yonder, look yonder ! you see them advancing in rapid movement towards us. What a countless host they appear ! They seem as if desirous of shewing off their numbers, for they move without the least attempt at concealment.”

“Oh, how lovely looks the plain ! God’s sun is shining bright, and yonder troops seem to enliven the prospect ; but it makes me shudder, Dan, to think that death precedes them. Oh, what thousands must die of those living foes and these living friends ! Where is Lord Wellington ?”

“He is in the great convent, which you behold in the midst of that great wood, on the summit of the range of mountains. That Convent of Carmelites is his head-quarters.”

“But what a mockery it seems, to see that huge cross reaching up to the skies, emblematical of peace, whilst all before it speaks of war.”

“If every soldier did but think of Him who died on Calvary, that cross would not be displayed in

vain. The poor monks, however, who go barefoot every morning to kiss its pedestal, and deem that mortification of the flesh is the best devotion of the spirit, have never seen such a display of terror from the Convent of Busaco, as that which is now exhibited in the sight of that immense stone cross."

"How the scene moves my heart, Dan. It is so lovely, and yet so terrible! I wonder how soldiers feel who await the battle?"

"I can tell you, my dear. We feel confidence in God, and in each other, otherwise we should tremble at the vast power of our enemy, and be conquered."

"God bless you, Dan! that is the spirit to go with into battle, if into battle you must go; but, oh that the olive branch could this moment be accepted, and every man could return to his own land in peace! I wish the time was come for swords to be sheathed, and ploughshares and pruning hooks to be the peaceful instruments of

the soldier's labours. Alas, that it should not be so now !”

“ But you must withdraw, my dear ; for our regiment is ordered into the reserve, and you must go even to the rear of that, to be out of the way of danger.”

“ Farewell, my brave fellows !” said our heroine, as she left the heights of Busaco ; and the martial music of the advancing hosts produced the harmony of sweet sounds, which was soon silenced by the thundering of the British cannon.

The battle of Busaco was fought with a display of that military power, which Wellington derived from his admirable position of defence. In vain did the columns of the French army advance, under Regnier, to the attack, though he had the easiest ground of ascent in the Sierra. In vain did Ney advance with his brave soldiers in the front of the Convent of Busaco ; the British artillery swept with awful effect the whole face of the ascent, and troops upon troops were hurled down by

it. In vain the enemy came on, and gained a momentary stand upon the summit of the position; the 45th and 88th came upon them like an avalanche, and overthrew them with dreadful slaughter. Regnier's troops were coming to a stand upon the edge of the rocky summit, and might have maintained a position, had not the brave Colonel Cameron, with determined courage, charged them at the point of the bayonet, and driven them over the precipice with such absolute destruction as to prevent their ever attaining the crest of the position again.

General Simon was taken prisoner after such an attack, in the very face of the British horse-artillery, as none but the armies of France could make. They actually drove the guns away; but General Crawford's charge with the 43rd and 52nd, accompanied as it was with a cheer that rang through the Sierra, was totally irresistible. He swept all before him, leaving one mass of mutilated foes, from the very summit, to the base of the mountain.

Never was confidence so completely overthrown

as that of Massena and Ney in this engagement. They had come on with a determination to force their way to Lisbon, and live upon the vitals of the country. They did not calculate upon such a stand, much less did they calculate that it was possible for them to sustain defeat.

Thousands of hearts were alive at Viseu and at Ciudad Rodrigo, to welcome, as they felt sure, the conquerors of Wellington. This latter place had become a little Paris of dissipation, and had driven away care or thought of defeat, with fêtes and frolics. How soon was the countenance of frivolity to undergo a change? The angry French Generals, though conscious of defeat, were resolved to have vengeance. They lost the battle of Busaco, and Wellington did not choose to pursue them, but took up his position at Coimbra.

The duties of burying the dead fell upon the victors, who nobly performed it; and, with generosity and humanity, had the wounded carried to the rear, where British surgeons attended to their wounds, and British soldiers sympathized with the sufferings of a brave enemy.

Our young heroine here became again conspicuous by assisting in the duties of the hospital, and, in thankfulness to God rejoiced in the safety of her husband and her friends. Dan led into the English camp a poor peasant girl of Portugal, who had wandered from the hills, driving her beast through the very midst of the French and British armies ; to the honour of all, she passed through the fray without the slightest molestation. The old soldier confided her to the care of our heroine, until her brother, one of the peasants of the country, employed in laying it waste according to orders arrived to protect her.

CHAPTER IV.

HORRORS OF MASSENA'S RETREAT.

THE French had pursued the English with more haste than judgment through Coimbra, and Trant had made good his way through the rear of the advancing enemy, and had cut off several of his troops. He had done this with his Portuguese Militia, and created great surprise and admiration in the army. He had secured many French officers as prisoners, whom he treated with that attention, which makes the strongest impression upon the human heart. A soldier without a sword is no longer an enemy, and if a good man, should be treated with respect.

Lord Wellington had gained the celebrated lines of Lisbon, where he had, with comprehensive calculation, determined to make his stand against the hosts of France. Portugal seconded all his efforts, the peasantry worked with zealous ardour. Forts, redoubts, scarps, and counter-scarps, were constructed along the formidable range of mountains from the Tagus to the Ocean. Lisbon supplied every requisite for the army, and the people were well fed and supported in their state of hostility against the common enemy. No want was experienced within the lines.

On the part of the enemy, however, his ill-advised advance, and too confident expectation of winning Lisbon, without a due calculation of the character of the English general, led him into the greatest distress. The check he met with here, and the failure of his supplies, the harassing nature of foes in his rear, and the inclemency of the season, produced that which Lord Wellington anticipated, discontent, desertion, and distraction in his forces.

But it is singular that, at this very period, while the French fared so badly, and the English were so well off, so many deserters should leave the British and go over to the French. Singular it was, but it principally took place among some of the wildest of the Irish, who, unable to content themselves within the confines of security, fancied a better state of things amidst their enemies, and, seized with a restless spirit, deserted their real friends. They suffered severely for their folly.

“I hate a deserter,” said Dan, to a party of his comrades, who were enjoying themselves in good quarters, “I hate a deserter, be he friend or foe. I neither like to see those poor fellows coming in from the French troops, nor to hear of those who leave our own. Had I my will, every deserter should be treated as a prisoner.”

“That would be hardly fair,” replied the master of the band, Henry Stuart. “That would be hardly fair, Mr. Drum-Major ; for those young fellows are forced as conscripts to join the French army, against

their own inclinations and opinions ; and I think it quite possible for many a Frenchman to hate Buonaparte as heartily as an Englishman can."

"Well, that is no reason why he should serve against his own countrymen. Let all deserters, say I, be sent to another service at once. That's what I mean. What madmen some of our fellows are, to leave our lines and go over to an enemy, who perhaps will make much of them for a moment, but afterwards treat them as they deserve, with contempt !"

"But I generally observe," said Hewitt, "that those fellows fight the most desperately when they recognize a comrade who knows them."

"Yes, because they know that their cry for quarter, if complied with, would only lead to their being condemned to be shot by a court-martial. For my own part, if I met any of you fellows in the ranks of the enemy, I should be strongly induced to disregard the call for quarter, even from my most intimate friend."

"Why, Dan," replied Hewitt's young wife, who,

with her husband and others of her own sex, formed a party of the 48th in the camp, "you would not kill my husband, would you?"

"Yes, my daughter, that I would, were he so unworthy of Wellington's daughter, as to leave her to join her foe. I am sure you would not love him, for I am persuaded treachery has no part in your breast. I should, however, as soon think of your deserting him, and he deserting you, as I should of either of you going over to the enemy."

"Well, Dan, I hope you will never find me before a court-martial for desertion. I will only go, when you go with me; and that will be *Long* first, and Hewitt afterwards."

"Well said, my boy!—well said! I have no reason to suppose you would leave my daughter here, and if you did, an old fellow like me would take care of her. How are your patients in the hospital, Mary?"

"All doing well except those who are too impatient to get well; and they, generally, are the longest time about it."

"No man of active spirit likes to be on the sick list."

"No, Dan ; but it may be the better for him to be so sometimes."

"That he may learn, I suppose, the value of female kindness ? Well, there is something in that, I will own ; though I have experienced but very little of it in the nursing line ! Yet I can imagine, and I can see it in others. If I should be ill, my dear, I shall look for your help."

"And if I can serve you, Dan, I will ; but I had no intention of suggesting that it was good for a soldier to be in affliction sometimes, because of the vanity our sex may feel in nursing him. No, Dan, I meant that it was good for his soul. Ay, you may all start ! But I suppose a soldier has a soul as well as a bishop ; and the patriarch here, though he is so high a politician, yet said, speaking of his own people, that on this account it was good for them to be afflicted."

"I believe we shall none of us deny the soundness of your argument, young woman ; and I, for one, should feel myself blessed, that any person of your

disposition should wait upon me in sickness, because she would be, through God, a comfort to my soul, as well as to my poor sick frame. I often wish," added Stuart, "that I might live to retire to some quiet village in my native country, and end my days in peace."

"You may end your days in peace, if you will, in this country as well as any other, and even in the midst of war, if you are so disposed."

"How so, my friend? how so? War and peace must be opposed. The sword of the flesh and the sword of the spirit, are two opposite things! How can we wield both at the same time? I think you will find this more difficult to answer, than our General would to reply to the enemy's cannon."

"No, I think not," said Hewitt. "As the head of my wife, I shall answer that by the words of my bible: 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's!'"

"Well, I have read my bible, young man, and I remember the passage had reference to the paying of tribute. But what of that?"

“Why very much. If Christ commands us to pay tribute to whom tribute is due, and therefore to render all homage to the lawfully constituted authorities of the countries to which we belong; and if he worked a miracle, to pay it for himself and his disciples, he surely never meant that we soldiers should refuse to do our duty to our King and country, to serve him more faithfully! I should be very unhappy, if I thought that my soul would be lost because I go into battle.”

“Well, but you will admit that a soldier's life is dangerous to his salvation.”

“Yes! I will admit that it is; but so is every man's: and frequently a civilian's life is much more hazardous in that respect than a soldier's.”

“Why so?”

“Because I see so many unrighteous, hard-hearted, hard-fisted, mean, treacherous, wicked men, with all the external semblance of peace, who are so far from God as to let nothing rule them but covetousness. They are ten times more rapacious

than a soldier; ten times more cruel; ten times more violent; because some of them are so wrapt up in what the world, and their own peculiar society think of them, that they will sometimes do violence to their own nature, as well as to the laws of God."

"Why, Hewitt! one would imagine you had been a preacher."

"Dan here, and you too, Mr. Stuart, know that I have not been such without being a practiser. I love harmony, I love peace; and I should be glad, with God's permission, to see the day of general peace. God grant it may come! But whilst I am a soldier, I will do my duty as such, and still hope for salvation, as my bible teaches it me. I have known even a Quaker's son stand a penitent at his dead father's gate, yes, even on the day of his funeral, and yet his mother and his former friends refuse him admission into the house. Rich! rich in this world's goods! Ay, I have often seen those friends, behind their counters, with rolls of gold before their eyes—but I say, master, what was in their hearts? and how

will they stand before their Heavenly Father, when they could all pass the poor boy coldly and silently by, in funeral procession, and leave him to sit alone on his father's grave ; yea, though he had been a sorrow to him, without one word of nature or Christian comfort to his afflicted soul ?”

“The young one must have offended them beyond endurance, or such a thing would never have happened.”

“And pray, my good master of the band, what endurance is that which knows the boundary of forgiveness ? Ho ! ho ! You would have judgment rejoicing against mercy, would you ? If so, we should have a race of cruel soldiers indeed, proclaiming peace, with hearts at war with God and his mercies ? Wars will not cease, till covetousness, extortion, pride, and presumption, have given way to that grace and humility of heart which, while it purifies nature, proves that eternity has overcome time.”

“Well, Hewitt, no man shall say you are not positively a divine, though you wear a red coat.

But what have you done with that poor handsome creature, who, in her innocent simplicity, drove her beast through the battle without any opposition?"

"Nay, you must ask my wife; she took care of her."

"I delivered her up in safety to her own brother, who recognized her in the camp. Poor thing! she had no idea of her danger. She had received orders to go to Lisbon, and only waited to relieve her poor aged mother, till she commanded her to go on. But the child would not leave until she had closed the eyes of her mother, and then, covering her with her mantle, she proceeded, unconscious of the lateness of her movements."

"Well, Dan," said young Leonard, a friend of Hewitt's, "I never felt my heart quiver for any one so much as I did when I saw that simple child driving the ass along the very fiercest quarter of the battle. I was afraid a stray shot would strike her. I was afraid a Frenchman would seize her; I was afraid some of our own men should insult her—but

every man let her pass ; officers gave way for her ; the men cheered her ; and, like innocence passing through the fiery trials of life, she surmounted all the dangers, and arrived at Lisbon in safety."

"Neither you nor I could so have done, my comrade ; we may rejoice that she did. I am glad she has found her protector. She was a beautiful peasant girl."

"That she was," replied our heroine ; "and from what I could make of her, seemed to me, to be worthy of the consideration she received."

If such incidents as these, and such conversations, formed the subjects for reflection in the soldiers' camp, war would afford many a lesson, not unprofitable to the general reader. But it must be confessed that such things seem more romantic than real ; and had they not been corroborated by historians who have recorded the fact, the narrative of this common soldier might perhaps have been doubted. But stranger things than these, in this

history of the Soldier's Wife, will be found perfectly correct.

The difficulties which Lord Wellington had to contend with, single-handed, seemed almost romantic. Though defending Portugal, its government seemed more ready to betray him into the hands of his enemies, than to assist him. He had to contend with opposition not only in the hosts of Massena, but in the counsels of his country, and those of the country he was defending. A master-mind is greater under the pressure of difficulties, than it is in the presence of advantageous circumstances. Wellington showed himself a sincere patriot and good politician when he wrote home, thus :

“I should be sorry if Government should think themselves under the necessity of withdrawing from this country, on account of the expense of the contest. From what I have seen of the objects of the French Government, and the sacrifices they make to accomplish them, I have no doubt, that if the British army were for any reason to withdraw from the Peninsula, and the French Government were relieved

from the pressure of military operations on the continent, they would incur all risks to land an army in his Majesty's dominions. *Then indeed would commence an expensive contest.* Then would his Majesty's subjects discover what are the miseries of war, of which, *by the blessing of God, they have hitherto had no knowledge*; and the cultivation, the beauty, and prosperity of the country, and the virtue and happiness of its inhabitants would be destroyed, whatever might be the result of the military operations. *God forbid that I should be a witness, much less an actor in the scene !**"

Yet, at this very time, this great man was enduring from the Patriarch of Portugal, and the Government, tantalizing trials and indignities, which can scarcely be credited. The Portuguese actually refused supplies to their own troops, and many became dependent upon British charity. Officers who arrived in Lisbon were quartered in empty and deserted houses, and troops had to bivouac in the

* Letter to Lord Liverpool, March 23, 1811.

very streets, whilst the defenders of the country were harassed by the French, and spending their money and their lives for an ungrateful people. Well might Wellington depict the miseries of his own country if invaded, from the terrific lesson then before his eyes, and say, "God forbid that I should be a witness, much less an actor in the scene." Every good man will devoutly echo that language, and as devoutly pray that God will preserve us from such calamity. But if it be necessary to reduce our national pride, and national madness by such a visitation, it will assuredly come, if our people forsake their God! Men, in the days in which we now live, are wonderfully speculative upon every thing which appertains to the calls of Mammon, and but little consistent in matters of religion.

The horrors of war were indeed to be unfolded in the retreat of Massena from Portugal.

"Up, my boys, up!" was the exclamation of Dan Long to his comrades, in the latter part of October, 1810. "We are not going to remain long within the lines of Lisbon."

“How know ye that, Dan?”—

“By the orders we have received to beat to arms. General Hill's division is ordered to move towards Badajos, and if our Commander has not some intention of playing a new game, I am mistaken. Up with you, master of the band, and you, Thomas Hewitt, drummer, fifer, and bugle-man. Up with you, and mind your wife follows us closely; for my belief is, we shall never fall back again upon these lines, when once our General has left them.”

This old fellow had no bad idea of the measures of his commanding officer, for Lord Wellington had resolved to follow the retreating hosts of Massena, and to pounce upon them whensoever he could. Ably did that General conduct his retreat. Cruelties, however, unheard-of cruelties, disgraced his retrograde march. Villages were burnt—convents destroyed—men, women, and children murdered—helpless peasants robbed and butchered. At one time, five hundred Spanish asses were ham-strung and left upon the road, that the poor beasts might no longer be of service to any one.

“Are these creatures really men?” exclaimed Dan to his comrades, when he saw the poor beasts lying upon the ground, unable to rise, and looking the most melancholy picture of dumb despair. “‘A merciful man is merciful to his beast.’ And these poor beasts of burthen have borne the supplies of Massena’s camp without a murmur, and see how he has treated them! God will not permit this monster to prosper. Surely he will visit him. He might have left them to run wild, or have driven them before his camp; but to cut their ham-strings, and leave them to be eaten alive by the wolves! Oh, Massena, I would give thee no quarter, did I meet thee in single combat this day!”

Dan was not the only one in the British army that day, who said as much as that, for every soldier who saw the sight execrated the man for the deed. But this was not the worst cruelty. They murdered the peasantry in cold blood. They drove them into houses, and starved them to death.

Our heroine entered a chateau in the mountains, to see if she could find any refreshment left by the

enemy. Such a sight did the hall of that once hospitable though retired mansion exhibit, that she ran out of it again with extreme horror, and calling to a troop of the 43rd, then passing on a lower ledge of the mountain, she begged of them for God's sake to come up to the old house. The Colonel of that regiment was one of the first to enter, and there he beheld a scene, which is almost too horrible for pen to describe. Fifty defenceless females and children had been driven into that house. The gates had been closed upon them, and they were left by the merciless troops of Massena to perish.

"Oh! my countrymen!" exclaimed our heroine. "Oh! my countrymen! Each of you give me a morsel for these poor wretches!"

Alas! they could not eat. Thirty-five of them were lying dead, and fifteen sat beside the dead, in momentary expectation of giving up their breath. But one man was there among them; and when our heroine, with trembling hands, presented him with a biscuit, he almost seized with his teeth the hand of the kind creature who supplied him. Yet he had

not strength to stand. The poor women seemed less ravenous; they could not open their jaws to bite the biscuit, though their frantic eyes bent with unearthly fixedness upon the food. So long had they been without sustenance, that the very muscles of their faces were drawn back, and they looked more like corpses from the catacombs than living creatures. The children all died first; and those who survived had shown that female delicacy, which in death is so decent and becoming. They had laid them out one beside another, and covered them with their garments, and then sat themselves quietly down to die! Oh! ye who live in rich saloons furnished with soft cushions, and lie on beds of down in your sickness, lift up your hearts to God in thankfulness that you are spared such horrors, and be truly humble for your sins!

“What is to be done with these poor creatures?” was now asked.

“I will remain with them, Captain, if you will only order one of your men to send some of the band of the 48th to be my guard,” was the answer of the soldier’s wife.

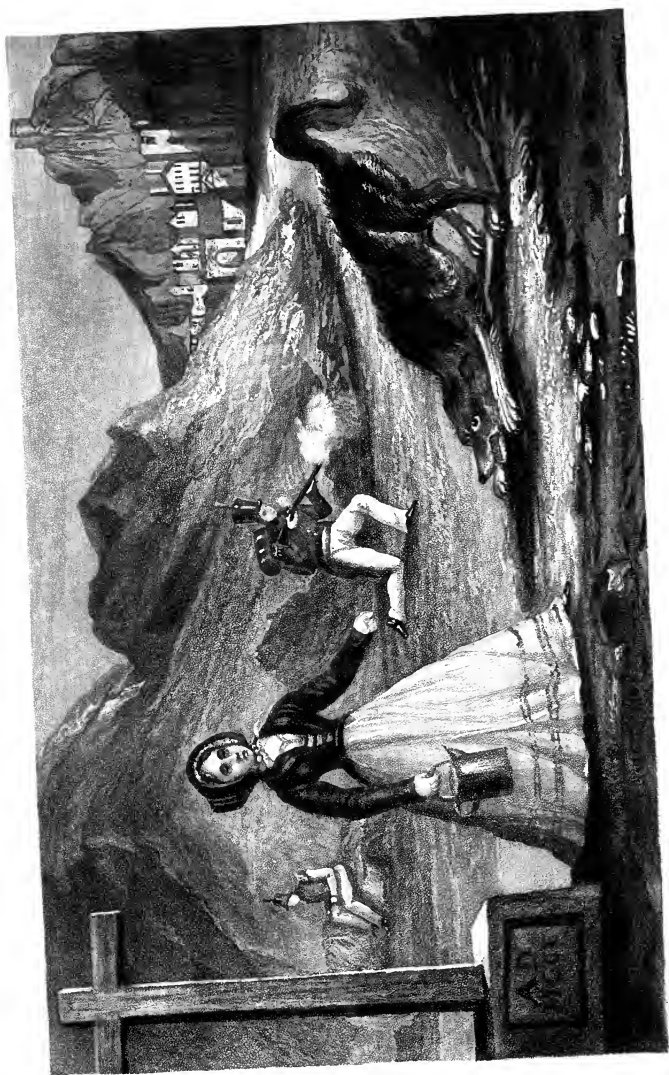
Alas ! our heroine had but short time to help them ; they dropped off quickly : seven died that very day, and the rest, from drinking some strong brandy, furnished with more generosity than judgment, became delirious. But two of the whole party stood up again, the man and one woman, who were conducted to the ruins of Redinha.

Such scenes of devastation and cruelty every where marked the footsteps of this bloody army ; but vengeance pursued them. The very dogs became familiar with French blood, and were taught, with strange aptitude and sagacity, to distinguish between a wounded Frenchman and one of another nation. The peasants themselves encouraged and taught them this refinement, and pursued the French with retaliation and death, whenever they could.

The Convent of Alcobaça was defiled and burnt ; its antiquity was disregarded. The towns of Redinha, Canderia, and Miranda de Corvo, were given to the flames. In the district of Lyria, the population was diminished from forty-eight thousand to sixteen thousand. Wolves, dogs, and

vultures, quarrelled over the remains of men even in the very streets ! Our heroine herself but narrowly escaped being seized by a wolf, even in the broad day. She had gone to a well in the vicinity of Pombal, for a draught of water, and was returning with her can to her husband, who was sustaining a wounded and sickly comrade whose strength had failed him on the march, when a wolf was seen tracing her steps from the ruins of the town.

Her husband saw the ravenous beast, before his wife was aware of her danger ; and, taking up his comrade's musket, ran towards her. This action first made her aware of danger, and she turned round, expecting to see a Frenchman following her : she beheld the enemy with his open jaws and ravenous eyes, galloping towards her. The soldier's wife knew in an instant that it was no use to flee. She turned—she stood still, nor dropped the can of water from her hand. The wolf stopped also within two yards of her, ready to take his spring. At that moment, a bullet from her husband's mus-



The Surprise

ket, rolled the monster at her feet, and she was in her deliverer's arms !”

“You have had a narrow escape, my dear !” said Dan, when he was told of the circumstance. “What did you think of the wolf?”

“I had not much time to think ; but I saw that if he seized me I had more chance of resistance with him in front, than if I ran away.”

“Well said for a soldier's wife ! But take care you do not wander near the ruins without a protector. Death has made even the birds and beasts of prey so familiar with the taste of human flesh, that they begin to despise horse-flesh as much as we do. And you would have been a tender morsel for them.”

“Well, Dan, thank God, I am safe amongst you again !”

Lord Wellington pursued the retreating foe. The treacherous Governor of Badajos yielded, or rather sold himself and his countrymen to the French Marshal. General Imar had succeeded the noble

Menacho, and, amidst the scorn of the foe, marched out of Badajos with military honours, but eternal disgrace. He had been promised relief, but he chose the coward's reward, dishonour. He hid his head from that day, and dared not look at a friend, much less a foe.

Many severe combats, with varied success, were the consequences of Lord Wellington's advance. Massena invaded Portugal with sixty-five thousand men, and left it most unwillingly with but thirty-five thousand, thus losing thirty thousand men, without gaining a single battle against the English. He had met his equal in arms, and more than his equal in judgment; and, after proudly boasting, that he would annihilate the English, and drive them into the sea, he found himself at last driven along by men, whom he began to find as brave and strong on land as they were upon the ocean. The Portuguese themselves beheld, at last, the invader expelled from their country, and none but French prisoners remaining in it.

“Well, my boys, we have done it, have we not?”

said the merry Dan, after being quartered in cantonment with his regiment, on the hill of Almeida. "We have beat the French out of Portugal!"

"You have beaten your drum, and the armies have beaten the enemy," said the soldier's wife. But why may I not say *we*, as well as you, Dan?"

"And so you may, to be sure, my dear. What's an army without drummers to beat to arms; and what's a drummer without the arms of his wife to help him? You would make now a better sketch for an artist, than you would have done when I told you that you looked like an angel."

"And pray why so, Dan?"

"Because now you look like a soldier's wife. There you stand, with your arms a-kimbo, resting on my noble drum, determined I suppose, to keep that silent, whilst you give free scope to your own voice. I say you look now an exact picture of a soldier's wife."

"Well, Dan, I think, now *we* have beaten the French out of Portugal, *we* may talk a

little ; and if *we* boast a little, *we* cannot say it is of our own strength. *We* have done well, Dan ! and I suppose *we* must do better. *We* must rest a little while before *we* begin to fight again. This is but a wee-wee bit of a speech, Dan ; so the sooner we end the discussion, the better."

"Here comes a limner, Mary ; young Leonard takes likenesses ; if you have a mind to oblige old Dan, stand still for a few moments just as you are, and let me have you, drum and all, and as long as I live, I shall like it."

She consented. A few hasty traces of the pencil, and there was the soldier's wife, looking over the plains of Elvas, from the hills, the camp seen in the distance, and Dan's drum in the foreground. Her bonnet fell back from her head, and exposed a fine, broad, intelligent, open forehead. She was grown a very fine young woman, and would have been no disgrace to the pencil of a better artist. She was tall, very tall, and proportionately stout. Benevolence was the ruling characteristic of her features ;

and the attitude in which she was taken, whilst Wellington was resting on his arms, and Beresford before Badajos, was no inappropriate position for a soldier's wife. I hope, reader, you will like the sketch.

CHAPTER V.

FUENTES D'ONORE, AND ALBUERA.

THE month of May, 1811, was remarkable for two of the most bloody contests in which the British soldiers were ever engaged in the Peninsula. Both victories were attended with deep mortifications to both the Commanders ; to Wellington on account of the escape of the garrison of Almeida when there was every probability that the thing could not be effected ; and to Beresford, at having gained a useless battle, at such a loss as crippled his exertions afterwards, and rendered the work of the great Captain of his age doubly arduous and difficult.

Massena had received powerful additions to his

forces, and urgent commands from the despotic master whom he served, now politically and effeminately engaged in the saloons of Paris. The acquisition of empires gives no peace nor security to an usurper. If Napoleon hoped to feed upon the praises of posterity, he went the worst way to work to perpetuate the supply of sustenance for the public mind. He had certainly raised to an enormous height, the military glory of France ; but, had the man conquered the world and become its King, his ambition would not have been satisfied. He would have wanted new worlds for his further exaltation. Oh ! let the little Rock of St. Helena teach a lesson, not to France only, but to every ambitious man who seeks his own glory, that pride must have its fall. Perhaps Napoleon was greater when digging in his garden on that rock, than he ever was after he married the Princess of Austria, and sought to perpetuate his overgrown and absolute monarchy.

But he had felt the first blow to his invincibility, in the military glory which began to crown the

arms of the people, against which he had sworn everlasting hatred. His anger was proportionately strong. Compelled as he was to remain in France by unpleasant tidings from the north, he sent all the reinforcements he could into Spain, and commanded Soult to join Massena and drive the leopard from Lisbon into the sea. But Massena had already been driven from Portugal, and Soult, rather jealous of his fame, or not exactly agreeing in his views, instead of joining Massena at the Lines of Torres Vedras, directed his army towards Badajos. The result was, that the British army divided, had to fight two dreadfully unequal battles, and in both came off victorious.

It would be interesting to many of my readers, were I to expatiate upon the battle of Fuentes d'Onore, and to treat of the gallant manner in which Lieutenant-Colonel Williams of the 60th Regiment, took up his position on the memorable evening of the 3rd of May; how Major-General Nightingale was wounded in the heat of the battle; how, after Lieutenant-Colonel Williams was wounded, the

brave young Cameron was carried off the field. The letter which Lord Wellington wrote, in praise of this young warrior's end, will form a memento of worth to the writer and the family to whom it was written, as long as the memory of battles shall remain. The writer feels the glowing enthusiasm of the victors of that day. He could speak of Picton. He could tell of Major Dick's gallantry with the 42nd. He could make honourable mention of Cadogan, and Major Chamberlain. He has something to tell of Houston, Mackintosh, Nixon, the noble Craufurd, and Sir Stapleton Cotton, Colonel Ashworth, and Colonel Hill. He could expatiate upon Lord Blantyre and the 2nd Battalion of the 42nd; Lieutenant-Colonel Guire, and Captain O'Hare of the 95th. He could speak of Major Woodgate, Major Macdonald, and Major Aly, of Major Pinto, and Colonel Sutton; of Lieutenant-Colonel Pym, and the Hon. M. Trench; of Major Russel Manners, and Lieutenant-Colonel Wallace; of Major Wild, and Lieutenant-Adjutant Stewart: but where every soldier behaved like a Briton under his Commander, it would fill a volume to note the

actions of individuals, on the eventful 5th of May, 1811. Our heroine was not at this battle. She was, however, with the army of England in a more doubtful contest, which happened soon afterwards.

Lord Wellington's military tactics were efficiently displayed at the battle of Fuentes d'Onore, where, for three days—that is, from the evening of the 3rd, to the evening of the 5th of May, he maintained his position against an adversary greatly his superior in troops, in position, and supplies ; but his inferior, that day at least, in the judgment of advantage to be obtained.

Not long after the battle of Fuentes d'Onore, the second division of the British army under Beresford, had to fight a battle which has scarcely its equal for bloodshed, when the numbers are taken into consideration. Soult had left Seville, determined to relieve Badajos. The siege had gone on slowly, on account of the rocky nature of the soil through which the men had to cast up their works.

News reached Beresford of Soult's advance. He held a conference with Blake, and Castanos, the Spanish General, and it was agreed to meet the French in the field, with all the forces they could collect. Orders were given for every man to be in readiness to meet the foe.

"Now, Mary, my dear," said old Dan to young Hewitt's wife, as they were taking leave of each other at Elvas, "don't you be far behind us, and take my old cloak for a covering, for I am persuaded, notwithstanding the uncommon heat of the weather, that you will find that cloak of service during the night. Besides, you may be of some service to your friends, for I feel we shall want friends soon. We are going to fight. Lord Wellington is not here—Hill is not here, and Beresford is a brave fellow; but he knows little of the treachery of Spanish pride. I declare I hate a battle, where we have anything to do with Spaniards for our allies. I cannot forget Talavera, and God only knows where we shall fight the French; but I pretty well know we shall

have the fighting, and the Dons will claim the honour."

"I will not be far behind you, Dan. I thank you for your cloak; I shall be comfortably wrapped up in it under the boughs of trees, and I will not forget to pray for you all. My husband says that our numbers are few, and he has caught your feelings about the Spanish troops."

"I say, my dear, take this snuff-box. You know why I ask it; and I know I may trust it to your keeping. Had Wellington been here, I should have ventured to keep it myself; but I know not how it is, I have some dread of the consequences of this battle. Only keep yourself with the wives of the 48th, and be you as brave in defending the fallen after the battle, as we are in it, and I know you will do us some service."

"Trust me, Dan—trust me. There are fourteen women in our company, who have vowed to defend the dying and the dead of our army from plunderers; and we have promised to each other, that we will aid one another in preventing the

wounded from being stripped of anything they possess."

"Now tell me, Mary, whose suggestion was that?"

"Well, Dan, it was my own."

"Then God bless you for it! It is the best feature I have ever known in a camp-follower. God bless you for it! I wish all soldiers' wives could be so formed into a troop of angels, to act in defence of those brave fellows of any nation, who are left dying upon the battle-field. We cannot then help ourselves. Too often our armies cannot help us, on account of their reduced numbers, and for fear of a fresh battle. But if all the women were like you, Mary, to employ themselves in such a manner upon the dreadful field, after the fight, I need not say ye would be blessed indeed of mankind, and deserve your blessing."

"Hewitt will tell you, Dan, how shocked I have been to hear of some of the tales of the camp-followers. I never wished so much to possess a sword, as when I heard them speaking of

stripping the wounded and leaving them naked as the dead. My heart rose with indignant passion, and I did not refuse to give the heartless wretches their answers. From that moment, I became eloquent in my entreaties among the wives of our company and others, to join in a band called 'The Soldiers' Friends!' and I wish our company was ten times its number."

"Again I say, as an old soldier, God bless you! I wish our Colonel may hear of your band, and I will venture to say he would give it promotion. He is a very strict fellow; and though some call him half a sailor, yet let him once get upon the battleground, and I warrant he will prove as brave on land, as old Admiral Duckworth, his father, was at sea.

"As you know he is so strict, Dan, I wonder you stand talking with me, when your own regiment is ready to march. God bless you! my dear friend, and you, my dear husband. Though we part, I will keep you in view as long as my poor limbs are able to sustain my weight."

Our heroine had reason indeed, to summon up all her fortitude, for the field of Albuera was an eventful field to her.

The army under Beresford marched forward to the village of Albuera. They took up their position on the ground, the Spaniards on his right, and the Portuguese on his left. It was wise in Beresford to separate as much as he could, the troops of these two nations. His own influence was great with the Portuguese ; but no man, not even Wellington himself, ever had influence sufficient to command the Spaniards. Had not Beresford risked this battle, the Spaniards must have been routed, and the first moral lesson of the second war in Spain would have failed. Besides, the Portuguese themselves would have been thoroughly dispirited. As it was, these brave men, though officered by Englishmen, had been shamefully neglected. Half of them would have been unfit to advance to battle, but for the supplies they received from the British Commissariat.

It is a well known fact that, at Fuentes d'Onore,

the Portuguese troops had not a sufficient supply of ammunition to fight the battle, but had to gather up the spent balls of the enemy, to charge their own guns. If those countries prove ungrateful to England, should she ever want their aid, they deserve to be deserted by every man in the hour of their distress. The sacrifice which British principle, and British honour, and British freedom made in their behalf, was such as no nation ever before made in the sight of the world, in behalf of another. Did they deserve it? Time has not yet shewn it; but time will do so.

Beresford wisely separated these two allies, Spain and Portugal. The people of each nation were jealous of the other, and they despised each other. Only pass the border, and you are sensible in a moment that you are among a different people. The Spanish and Portuguese, though both suffering from the inroads of one common enemy, and both desirous for his destruction, would never unite to fight together. No, they would rather fight one with another, so great is their mutual dislike. The

presence of a superior British force could alone command a co-operation from both. But Dan's prognostics proved but too fatally true.

The Spanish cavalry did not arrive on the field until midnight of the 15th of May.

The British had eight thousand in the centre ; on the right ten thousand Spaniards, and on the left about seven thousand Portuguese. When it is considered that here were troops of three nations, met against an experienced veteran army, and that many of these three nations were but raw troops ; that they had been totally unaccustomed to act together, whilst all the soldiers of France had been disciplined with each other, it is wonderful indeed, that the battle was gained at all.

The night before that battle, was one of awful suspense ; suspense to soldiers, and to their friends and foes. Beresford had a risk upon his shoulders, which would have terrified a braver man than he, if such could be found. He must strike a blow for England, Portugal, and Spain, which he felt must be of the utmost importance. A battle lost must,

he felt, be better than a hasty retreat; and, conversing that night with many of his staff, he spoke of Wellington, Hill, and others, with a hope that the conduct of his companions in arms would be worthy of the notice of all brave men.

Dan and his comrade sat, or rather reclined against their drums. The common soldier knows but little of the disposition of a battle. He has confidence in his Commander, and, obedient to his orders, he is ready to do the work appointed him. It is generally the duty of the band to be in the rear, and attend to the wounded, unless they volunteer for action, or are permitted to exchange places with a wounded or sick comrade. There are instances of men of the noblest courage being suddenly taken ill the night before a battle, and being quite unable to stand.

Such was the case with one fine fellow of the 48th, who actually fainted away on that night, and was carried into the rear for dead. Dan, with the band of his regiment lay around him. Stewart, Ashby, Betts, Hewitt, Winter, Holmes, Davies,

Harbourg, Leonard, Johnson the cymbal-beater, a man of colour, Charles Thomas, Darby, Kenedy. Nor did they fail to think and speak of their officers and comrades around them. Some men sleep well before a battle ; others never rest at all : so much depends upon the habit of the mind. Our friend Hewitt never failed, any one night, either in the open field or in the camp, to commit himself to the care of God. He never forgot his prayers for the safety of his own soul, nor for that of his friends.

“What a beautiful night it is, Dan !” said he. The stars seem to be talking together as brightly as on the morning of creation, and ride on in the grand ethereal space above us, as magnificently and as peaceably, as if there was nothing but harmony before them.”

“Nor is there, Hewitt. They obey their Creator, and do not, as we do, fall into disorder.”

“No, not just yet ; but when I look at them, Dan, and think that the night must come when they shall fall from their courses, I cannot help thinking what will become of them all !”

"It is but little matter to us, my lad. What may become of us, before those beautiful glittering stars shall shine again upon this world of war and carnage? How many of our brave comrades must leave their bodies on this plain before to-morrow night! God grant their souls may go to heaven!"

"Amen!" say I, "Dan, Amen! Nothing can be lost. Our souls cannot be lost, they must exist somewhere."

"Ay, Hewitt, but where?"

"That depends, Dan, upon their prospect. You and I have lived long enough amidst scenes of death, not to know by what uncertain tenure we hold our lives. But few around us care about anything but their bodies. God be praised, Dan, that I have not forgotten all that I learned in my early days, and I bless now that kind master and friend at Hingham, who taught me ever to believe that God takes care of our souls, ay more care for them than for our bodies. He knows the direction of every bullet in the army, of every sword in the hand, and

he can defend us against our foe when we despair of our own strength."

"I love to hear you talk, young man. You teach even old Dan."

"Now do not say I teach you, Dan. You knew long before I knew you that you had a soul, or you would not have conducted yourself so steadily and so kindly as you have done."

"Well, I knew I had a soul: but I do not think my steadiness has been on account of that, so much as for the sake of discipline and order in the sight of men. I wish I had made a better use of my views of discipline. I fear I have too often forgotten the responsibility of my soul, for the right conduct of my body."

"I am glad, my dear old friend, that you thus let me into the true state of your heart. I love you all the more dearly for this honest confession, though I am no Popish Priest to demand it of you. I freely confess to you that I have not only had many forebodings of evil for my soul and body, but I have spent days and nights in anguish, and

in prayer, for many thousand actual sins which deserve the deepest and severest punishment. I tell you truly, Dan, my bible has always been the best preacher to my poor soul. I make no parade of godliness. But I have sought, my dear companion, sought earnestly for God, for pardon, for salvation, for comfort, for consolation, and Dan, dear Dan, I may tell you on the battle-field, without any fear that you should now think me a hypocrite, I have found it in Jesus Christ."

"Hypocrite I never thought you, and God forbid that I should think any honest man such! You make me wish to pray."

"Ha! say you so, Dan? Say you so? Then, thank God, for that is his influence. And do not fail to bless him that he gives you that desire. I will come a little closer to you, and unite with you in prayer not only for ourselves, but for all around us."

Could the whole army have witnessed these brave fellows, kneeling against their drum, humbly confessing to God their sins, and imploring his

mercy even upon the hosts of enemies around them, they would have been struck with the simplicity and earnestness of heart, with which they made their requests known unto God. Nor did they both fail to pray for a blessing upon the arms of their country on the morrow, that those far away might be protected from the common foe.

What a contrast was this to the conduct of the foes around! They had not been reared in principles of religion, but in the ways of infidelity and false glory. They hoped for the morrow for the eye of man, and were creeping along the battle-ground in silence to take up a position on the height which had been neglected by the allied army.

Our heroine was in the rear of the battle-field towards Elvas, behind Hamilton's division of reserve. She, with her companions, had constructed a tent of boughs, upon a rising ground beneath one of those shady hills which grace the country. She had wrapped herself in dear old Dan's cloak; devoutly prayed for her husband, and for the provider of her covering; and, feeling that his gold snuff-box was

safe in her pocket, she commended herself to God, and slept soundly.

"I shall volunteer to-morrow for the ranks," said Dan; "and, Hewitt, what say you?"

"I have no objection to fight by your side, Dan, and may God preserve and keep us both!"

The brave fellows shook hands, as many did that night, and committed themselves to Him who best guards the sleeping soldier, and can alone give him rest.

The day dawned, but heavy clouds gathered over the distant mountains, and the mists of night rose up from the plains. At eight o'clock the trumpets sounded, and the regiments prepared for battle. The clouds which had gathered began to send down their showers, and the enemy commenced his attack upon the Spanish right. So slowly had these troops acted, that the French were upon them before they could form their line. So severe was the slaughter on the hill, that the Spaniards were driven from it like lightning, and in the utmost confusion. Soult

conceived the victory gained at once, especially as the confusion seemed to extend itself almost to the centre. General Stewart tried to rally the Spaniards ; he led up his forces to the attack, but his columns were beaten back ; and the Polish Lancers, favoured by the rain, wheeled round the hill, came upon their flank, and dispersed them over the plain. The Lancers separated, galloping here and there, spearing defenceless men, who knew not where to form, or how to make resistance. The Spaniards durst not advance against them. They neither would nor did.

The English General tried what force would do. He seized a Spanish Ensign and forced him forward, thinking, perhaps, that the troops would follow their colours : but not one would stir, and the moment Beresford's grasp was off the coward, he ran into the midst of the Spanish troops again. At this moment, a Polish Lancer dashed at Beresford, who, with calm intrepidity warded off his lance, and seized the fellow by the throat. He forced him off his horse, and one of his dragoons coming up at the

time, dispatched him. The personal prowess of the English General was conspicuous on that day. If his men were exposed to death, he himself set them an example of fighting, which could not fail to tell them, death or conquest must be the order of that day.

The British cavalry saw the murderous cruelty of the Polish Lancers ; they saw the cowardly conduct of the Spaniards ; they waited with anxiety the order to charge, and when it was given, it is impossible to describe its fury.

Solidly, steadily, but speedily galloped General Lumley and the British cavalry against those too sanguine spearmen, the Lancers. They were irresistibly overthrown. The sabres threw up the lances, and cut down the Lancers ; and those who escaped, came but once more to show their faces on that battle-field. Never did the cavalry of England, though not half the number of its antagonists, bear so fierce a front. They rode as one man, and with such a determined front, that nothing could stand against them.

The brave 31st gained the hill in beautiful order. The battle was restored ; Houghton's brigade cleared the way, and they stood on that summit firing until their ammunition began to fail. Then came up the French reserve. The Lancers charged again, and victory seemed to favour the enemy. The retreat had nearly been sounded, and another minute or two would certainly have seen the British army in full retreat. But Colonel Hardinge made his memorable advance with the 4th division.

"Now, my brave fellows," he exclaimed, "let not England be beaten ! Remember Talavera !"

How do a few short words, with a fixed resolution, inspire the soldiers with hope. They did advance, and saved the battle. Desperate indeed, now became the contest. The British officers seemed inspired with all the ardour of men who were never to be conquered. They cheered on their men, and set them such an example as made them perform prodigies of valour.

The gallantry of the Fusileers and the Buffs will be remembered for many generations. Brave Ensign

Thomas died with the colours in his hand, having refused to surrender them with life: and Walsh, who recovered them, when he had the staff shattered in his hand, and fell desperately wounded, even then tore off the flag, thrust it into his bosom, and said, "If I must die, let the colours of my regiment be my shroud!"

The brave fellow, though left upon the field, sustained the horrors of the night, and was found with the colours upon him, when carried to the hospital.

Soult found that, notwithstanding all his personal bravery, he could not conquer the indomitable spirit of the English. Arbuthnot and Cole scattered his forces. Nothing could withstand their force; nothing could disorder, or check the steady advance of the Fusileers. But, oh! how few stood upon that hill when the French retired! One thousand five hundred only, out of six thousand English stood upon that hill.

What havoc was made in every regiment! They gained the battle. The French retreated and durst

not advance to renew the combat. The remnants only of regiments were left at eve, in battle array upon that bloody hill. The 48th had had its share of fighting. Alas ! it again lost its Colonel, as it did at Talavera. Colonel Duckworth was killed ; and our good old friend Dan Long had fallen among the slain, whilst Hewitt stood without a wound, and was ordered that night upon picket duty.

Torrents of rain fell upon the living and the dead, in the night after that battle. So few had Beresford left of his glorious army, that he could not spare a man to look after the wounded, till he was sure the French would not again attack him. So bold was the dauntless front he shewed, that Soult, thinking he must have reinforcements at hand, gave up the contest, and retired from the plains.

It was a mournful night, the 16th of May. The rain that fell, caused such anguish to the wounded, that their moans filled the camp with terror. Next day, Beresford requested the Spanish General to lend a hand, in the removal of his wounded ; but that

coward and cruel Spaniard refused a single man to help the British who were then bleeding in his cause.

Towards evening of the 17th, the camp followers came upon the plain, and, like a herd of harpies, began their work of plunder. Old Spanish crones, and Portuguese Jews and Jewesses, forming bands of ravagers, fell upon the slain. They stripped the wounded and the dead, and many a brave fellow had to defend himself from these reckless followers, at a second risk of cold-blooded murder. Not all were such demons. No ! For the wives of brave British soldiers formed a company of formidable defenders, upon that well-fought field. It is not to be denied, that many have met death after the battle by the hand of a murderer, who, thinking no eye could witness his atrocity, has killed a poor fellow for the sake of his purse, or his watch, or even his clothes. So dreadful is sometimes the warrior's death !

Our heroine and her company were upon the battle field, helping to remove the wounded, and collecting papers from the persons of many, and

forwarding them to the head-quarters of their respective regiments.

Their eyes were frequently directed to the blood-stained hands of marauders, and heartily did they wish for a troop of soldiers, to drive these wolves from their prey.

As Mary Anne was moving along, here and there lifting a head to see if life could be perceived, she discovered the well known face of one of the 48th, Sergeant Vincent, and Richard Jeckles, both natives of Bungay in Suffolk, lying dead close to each other ; another, and another, and another of the 48th. Her heart quivered, for neither Dan nor her husband were in the rear, or among those who were removing the dead.

At length she came upon two or three trampers stripping a body, and a painful groan was uttered by the very man whom they were thus robbing. It was well she heard it. In another moment she would have heard no more, for already had a Portuguese hag raised a hammer to strike the blow upon his forehead, when her arm was

arrested by the powerful grasp of the soldier's wife.

There are times when a woman feels the strength and daring of a man, and such was that moment with our heroine. She forced back the miscreant's arm with such violence that it was dislocated at the shoulder in an instant, the hammer fell from her grasp, and she herself fled cursing from the field. Our heroine called to her companions of the 48th, two or three of whom immediately came up, and they helped to lift up the wounded man ; when what was at once her horror and delight, to discover, that the soldier who was stripped, was her dear old friend, Dan Long !

“ Dan ! Dan ! Dear Dan, it is I ; do you not know me Dan ? ”

Dan feebly opened his eyes, and smiling upon his deliverer, could only just articulate, “ God bless you ! ”

His deliverer was not without help. She applied her well filled can to the soldier's parched and feverish lips. She dressed him in his own suit,

which the wretches had not carried off; and finding Dan's ankle was shattered, and his body pierced with a spear, she chose to sit by him till some of the soldiers, appointed to remove the living, should approach to lend their aid. All that night she sat by Dan. She examined his spear-wound, and took out part of the clothing which had been thrust into it. She covered the wound with dry rags; she collected knapsacks for his head, got his own cloak under him, and wrapped it round his limb; and, fearless of wolves or plunderers, she sat by her dear old friend, nor felt that she could do too much, for one who had shown her such repeated proofs of his love.

She anxiously put one question to him: "Is my husband alive?"

"I hope so, Mary; but, if dead, he is happy; for he is a true Christian."

A night of prayer was spent beside the wounded and the dead, and the morrow brought relief; for Hewitt heard that his wife was on the plain, and truly guessed where he should find her. He

came with some comrades to the joy of his faithful wife ; and Dan, the drum-major and volunteer for the battle of Albuera, was removed with care and caution to the hospital at Elvas.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HORRORS OF BADAJOS.

IN a lone cottage on the outskirts of the town of Elvas, the hospital being crowded, old Dan was billeted, with a Portuguese widow, whose husband fell at Busaco. The Adjutant of the 48th, under the express direction of the surgeon of the regiment, sought for the soldier's wife, our heroine, to wait upon a wounded officer.

"I wish, Hewitt," said he, "you would persuade your wife to come and attend to a wounded officer. She shall be well paid, and you shall take no hurt."

"I will do my best, Sir; but a dear old friend of

her's and mine is wounded, and I know she will not desert him.

“But he shall be attended to, and Stevenson tells me your wife is the best nurse in the army.”

“She is a very clever young woman ; but I tell you again, I hardly think she would desert Dan Long, the drum-major, even for Lord Wellington, unless expressly ordered by Dan himself, so to do.”

Nor would she desert him at that time, though sought after by several, for her aptitude and activity. Not a little was it to her honour, that money could never move her to leave her friend. She had no heart to seek for selfish advantage, when her best friend must languish ; and for him she refused many an importuning offer to wait upon his betters. She was true to her colours, as a brave ensign is in battle. The colours she served under were those of the “Soldier's Friend ;” and she conceived her old friend Dan wanted her help as much as any officer wounded at the battle of Albuera.

“Dan suffers as much as the General,” said she to her husband. “Dan’s wounds want dressing as well as a Colonel’s. A drum-major feels as sharply as a Major of Dragoons; and, until Dan can move his drumsticks again, I will stick to him, with your permission, Hewitt, as long as I can be of service to him.”

Nor did Hewitt secretly wish that she should do otherwise. He was quite as partial to Dan as his wife was; and, though he was obedient to his superior officers, yet he could not command his wife to leave a tried friend in his sufferings, for the richest offers of any officer in his Majesty’s service; and he honoured her for the integrity of her conduct.

“Well, Mary,” said Dan, “I told you long ago you were an angel; and truly you were my guardian angel on that dreadful night of the 17th of May! Old Dan would have been dispatched, had not God provided me with a friend in the hour, ay, in the last moment, when I wanted one.”

“An angel, dear Dan, is a very humble instru-

ment of the Almighty's. He can make a plough-boy his messenger, as well as any aid-de-camp of the General. It was certainly a providential thing my hearing your moan on the battle-field, and God put it in my heart, before I knew who you were, to come to your rescue. Thank God, my dear friend, that I was so near you !”

“ And thank God that you are near me now ! for what with my wounded side and fractured ankle, I know not how long it may be before I beat my drum, or blow a bugle again. You will not leave me, Mary ?”

“ For no one but my husband, Dan. No, not for the Marshal himself. So cheer up ! cheer up ! Macauley says your side would soon heal, if the fever which the irritation of the wound produced the night after the battle, would but leave you. Your ankle, he says, will take the longest time ; and if you go to the wars again, you must take the trumpeter's place ; and ride one of our new Colonel's horses.”

Dan sighed, for he thought his marches were over.

“Is Duckworth dead?”

“Duckworth is dead!—He fell leading his regiment gallantly up the hill. I hear that General Houghton is dead, and is to be buried here in Elvas. Myers, the brave Sir W. Myers, has died since he was carried off the field. General Stewart is wounded, Major-General Cole is also wounded; and I hear near two hundred officers are in a state to render their services, for some time at least, of no avail.”

“I never saw such a battle, Mary; and I have been in a few in my life—in the west, and the east; I never saw such a fighting battle before I fell. How thankful I ought to be, that when so many officers are wounded, I should have so kind an attendant!”

“No more than you require, Dan. Make yourself easy, my dear friend. Hewitt says you shall want for nothing; and moreover, he has declared that if his regiment moves away from Badajos, I shall remain at Elvas until you join the regiment with me.”

And so she did. The siege of Badajos was raised, even though Lord Wellington himself, and Hill, and his bravest officers and soldiers stood before it to direct the siege. The *matériel* they had was found insufficient for the purpose. Bravery and resolution were not wanting, but both time and ammunition were. And what could be effected by force, without these things?

Wellington retired from the siege. He strengthened the Portuguese frontiers, made Portalègre his head-quarters, and invested Ciudad Rodrigo. The enemy scoured the country, and laid waste the whole of the Spanish and Portuguese frontier, until they were compelled by want of supplies of forage and cattle to separate—Marmont going northward, and Soult taking up his quarters at Seville. These movements induced Lord Wellington to leave the Alentejo in the care of Hill, whilst he more immediately hastened to his observations of Ciudad Rodrigo.

So powerful were the arms of France, in point of numbers and strength, that it was impossible for

Lord Wellington to prevent their relieving Ciudad Rodrigo. An army of sixty thousand men, in all the grandeur of French discipline, paraded ostentatiously before the gaze of Wellington, who had only about one-third of the allied force at his disposal. Had the French General known the exact position of the English, he would never have retired as he did, without doing anything. But it will happen to us all, that when we stand in the most dangerous position, the ignorance of our enemies may save us from destruction. Happy the man, who, in the midst of his own well known weakness, has confidence in God !

In the meantime, Dan began to limp about, and his kind friend was enabled to lend her assistance in the hospital at Portalègre, where Dan and she once more joined the gallant 48th. General Hill had received orders to proceed with active measures against Gerard, who was sent by Soult to cut off the supplies of the Spanish army ; and secretly and gallantly was the work performed at Aroyo de Molinos. General Gerard escaped with but three

hundred men, and upwards of a thousand French were taken prisoners, whilst the English had but seven killed, sixty-four wounded, and one missing. The effect of this gallant action raised the spirits of the British army, and induced both their enemies and themselves to think highly of their commanders. General Hill became Sir Rowland Hill, honoured with the Order of the Bath in consequence of this action.

Ciudad Rodrigo was invested and besieged in the month of January, 1812. On the 8th, the ground was broken, and on the 19th the citadel surrendered. The brave Mackie, who led the forlorn hope, was the first to find a passage into the town, and the first to enter the citadel, and receive the surrender. Here fell the noble Crawford, whose body was buried in the breach before which he received his death-blow. Here fell M'Kinnon, a man whose education and manners equalled his courage, and who, to the consummate bravery of a British soldier, added all the influence of learning and religion to govern both his public and private

character—a gentleman, a hero, and a christian. The honours of a Spanish dukedom, and an English earldom, were conferred upon the hero of Ciudad Rodrigo.

He returned again to Badajos, resolved that this time the place should fall. It would fill a volume to describe all the works, either of the town itself, or of those who besieged it. Dreadful, dreadful indeed for reflection, was the sacrifice of life in that most sanguinary contest. The heart bleeds at the description, where bravery in those who stormed the different points, and those who defended them, was conspicuous on both sides. The demon of Discord and Darkness hovered over the gloom of that dreadful night, when Wellington's orders for the general attack were given. The brave soldiers of the forlorn hope were sacrificed by the bursting of a terrific mine. It is wonderful that a single lodgment should ever be obtained by any, before such skilful defenders as then stood upon the walls. When it is known how few can gain a footing at one time, it seems as if each single soldier had to

contend with the whole garrison, before he could be joined by a companion.

“You shall not leave me to-night, Mary,” said Dan, to his daughter, nurse, and friend, as she thought of her being useful after the siege. “You shall not enter that place. Your husband must take his chance, but I know the fierce nature of that assault, and the horrors that will be perpetrated after the place has surrendered. I am left here under orders to take care of the men who were wounded in the sortie on the 19th at night: and Colonel Fletcher has ordered me to provide a nurse, not for him alone as chief engineer, though he is most severely wounded, but for others who shared the same danger, and lie around him. You may now see Lord Wellington if you will, for he comes to consult Colonel Fletcher every day. You have plenty of work to do, and I know you will be unable to restrain the impetuosity of the Portuguese, or even of your own countrymen, when once they shall have got possession of the town.”

“But, Dan, do you not think I might help the wounded?”

“You may do that with less danger to yourself in an open plain, than within the walls of a town. I tell you, you have no idea of the madness of a host of successful besiegers. They forget death—they forget God—they forget honour—they forget virtue—they forget everything but what they can lay hands upon, what they can devour, and how they can gratify their lustful vengeance. It is all very fine, for men who do not see the horrors, to say that soldiers are entitled to a little licence after their fatigues in storming. A little licence given to them, is often the eternal damnation of their souls. Had I my will, the very first soldier who committed any act of wanton barbarity, after a place has once surrendered, should be instantly hanged beside the British flag on the height of the citadel, that all the army might see that England detests a villain, though he may wear the dress of a soldier. You shall not go out of the camp, my dear, until Hewitt returns from the breaches.”

“God grant him a safe return ! I cannot think our soldiers are many of them so cruel. I know the 48th are not.”

“That you know nothing of. Some of the best soldiers forget their nature at such times, and become bad men. The eyes of their officers are perhaps closed in death, they see no commander, receive no orders, and not thinking the eye of God is upon them, they commit depredations which at other moments they would be horrified to contemplate.

“I have seen something of their horrors in the hospital,” continued Dan, “I shall never forget one instance of remorse. The soldier knew he had but a short time to live. He put out his hand, to me, and with an agonizing cry, exclaimed, ‘Oh ! my friend, would to God I had been killed before the surrender ! My terrors are more dreadful than ten thousand deaths. God is angry with me, for an act—a cruel act of wanton wickedness, which now seems to scorch my soul with fiery indignation, and who and what shall quench it ?’ Never, Mary,

did I witness such a death, though all but the dying man were awed into silence. You shall not leave me until Hewitt returns."

"Well, Dan, I will obey your wishes, and attend to my duties here. I hope your forebodings may not prove such terrific realities."

"We shall see—we shall see! Time will prove."

And time did prove. Three days after the siege, Hewitt came into the camp in the evening, leading a poor Spanish girl, remarkable for her beauty and her sorrows.

"Wife! wife!" said Hewitt, "take care of this poor girl. She has been in my bosom forty-eight hours, and has never ceased weeping one moment. Even now she is loth to leave me. She knows not what I say, yet she clings to me as if she understood all that I would do. Oh, wife! never—never shall I forget what I have seen. Take her! take her, poor young creature! I know you will be kind to her."

She was a beautiful girl; her Spanish velvet

spencer fitted tightly to her delicate frame ; her dark black locks fell over her pale face ; her lustrous pupils, black, and surrounded by the inflamed eyelids, bursting with tears of agony, would have melted any but a heart of stone.

“Poor girl, take her into your own quarters, I will tell you all about her : but soothe her—soothe her ! Give her some refreshment. Oh ! may God forgive the wickedness of man !”

Scarcely could the poor trembler be persuaded to leave the British soldier. She looked so earnestly in his face, clung so closely to his side, and seemed so unwilling to part from her protector, that it was with reluctance she yielded to the persuasion of our heroine’s benevolent compassion. She smiled for the first time, when she made her comprehend that her deliverer was her husband. It was the smile of gratitude, than which Heaven has not afforded a richer reward to a good man’s heart, nor a more beautiful sight to the human eye. Oh, reader ! may you see it in your happiest moment, and you will own, that the writer of these pages has not written an exaggeration.

“ Dan, I want to have some talk with you ; let us walk out towards the banks of the Guadiana.”

“ Then you must pardon my limping, and I must have your arm on my left, and my stout cane in my right hand, and perhaps I shall get on. I half guess, however, what you are going to say. You want to speak of the horrors of the siege.”

“ I do—I do ; and, would to God that I had never been witness of such a sight. My brain is heated, not with the fury of the contest—not with the terrors of swords, axes, bayonets, and pistols, but with the madness of our comrades. Oh, Dan ! God only can expose the guilt of what I have seen. Man will never be acquainted with all the deeds of darkness which that town has witnessed. I want this cool air, this refreshing spirit of friendship, my good old companion, to shake off the load that oppresses my heart.”

“ Give it vent, my boy, give it full vent, and you will feel the better for it.”

“I verily believe Napoleon would have wept to have seen what I have witnessed, within the walls of Badajos.”

“Ah! indeed—indeed! Then must he have been smitten with remorse for having caused it. Remorse, however, would never have produced tears in him. I think I see such a man weeping for the iniquity of others, when he can never perceive his own guilt! It would be a strange sight indeed!”

“Our loss has been awful. I hear that upwards of three hundred officers, two hundred sergeants, and more than four thousand privates, have been killed or wounded; and yet, Dan, here am I, black, it is true, with powder, but untouched by the enemy, though I have had a fearful contest with a comrade. I hear that Wellington is astounded at the loss he has sustained, and actually gave way to a paroxysm of grief when he heard what a number of officers he had lost: but had he witnessed what I have beheld, his grief would have burst into madness at the abominable cruelty of those under his command.

“I volunteered with a party of the 38th, to storm the bastion of St. Vincent, where General Walker was wounded. Part of the besiegers had been falsely alarmed at the idea of a mine being about to be sprung, and we had to face the enemy, driving our terrified companions along the ramparts ; but we stood firm, beat back the French, and followed them into the Plaza. Almost at the same time, other troops came pouring in, and filled the city with maddening cries for plunder. How many windows were instantly closed with shutters ! How many terrified citizens sought the deepest shades of obscurity ! That very night were some crimes of deep and deadly dye, committed : but all safety was not yet secured. When San Christoval surrendered, in the morning, the plundering began. No more opposition from the enemy. Men began to glut themselves like beasts, upon whatever they could find. Robbery, murder, massacre, violence, brutality, and every species of licentiousness prevailed. I saw none to resist the fury of the soldiers. Each seemed only anxious to surpass his companion in excess.

“But, as night drew on, the contagion spread far and wide. I was hurried onward, amidst crashing doors, flying missiles of all kinds, shrieks, curses lamentations, wailings, and despair. Yet I could offer no opposition. I saw men actually cut down their officers, who sought to rescue some unfortunate victim from the grasp of the soldiers. Helpless old men and women were bayoneted in the streets, by the drunken soldiers. I saw jewels torn from the necks of the most elegantly dressed females, mothers butchered, helpless infants thrown from the casements, and neither age nor sex spared from the rapacity of marauders.

“On the second day, the camp-followers came into the city, and behaved worse, if possible, worse than the soldiers. I was present at a scene in one house, which defies description. A villain of a soldier demanded of a young Spaniard, the person of his sister, whom he was defending. She crouched behind him. He bravely resisted, though armed with nothing but a stiletto. His mother rushed between the soldier and her son, and in an instant,

he bayoneted them both. They fell into each others arms, and died. The young girl looked as if she were mad. She seized her brother's stiletto, sprang at the soldier's throat, and stuck it directly through his neck. The fellow could not articulate; his blood choked him, and, with a swollen face, he sank, and died of suffocation.

"The girl looked at me for a moment, as I entered the room from the corridor. Whether she read compassion in my countenance, I know not; but in another moment she dropped her dagger, and rushed into my arms, with such a cry for mercy, as made my nerves tremble, lest I should be taken for her murderer.

"What was to be done? I carried her out of that fearful place, and as I knew it would be the utmost folly then, to attempt to bear her through the streets, or even to remain in the rich saloon, especially as I already heard assailants at the door, I fled up stairs, bearing my poor fainting child as high up as the roof of the mansion.

"We entered a small room, with a sky-light

above, where an old half-witted woman was seated, counting her beads, at a little table, before a crucifix. She was the nurse of the family. The child flew to her, and again fainted away. In another moment, the old woman seemed to recover her senses ; she seized the child, opened a sliding wainscot door in the apartment, and thrust her in : but she would not go without me. She seized my arm, and spoke most imploringly to the old woman, but all seemed of no avail ; as if propriety were more to be regarded than the child's terrors, she would have prevented my entrance. But I saw the danger, the terror, and the despair depicted in the young virgin's countenance ; I saw she trusted me ; I saw she confided in me as a brother and a deliverer, and I followed of my own accord, and with my own hand drew back the sliding arras, and sat down in darkness, with my poor companion resting in my arms."

"Well done, Hewitt ! And is this the poor girl you have brought to the camp ?"

"It is the same. But, Dan, never shall I forget

the quivering anxiety of my poor child, as, with terrified ear, she listened to the thundering noise of heartless plunderers, ravaging every part of the house. It was well we entered as we did, for soon came a party of Portuguese and English bursting into the room, where the faithful old domestic, as I presume, sat still counting her beads by her taper, and watching her crucifix. The miscreants threatened her with torture, if she did not tell them where the money chests of the house were concealed. One took some keys from her, another took her beads, another her crucifix, another her missal, and then they made the poor woman go before them down the stairs, and delighted to torture her, by urging her forward at the point of the bayonet. They did not neglect to thrust their bayonets through the wainscot, in several places, and, so near my head did they come, as actually to fix the feathers of my cap into the opposite wood-work. God be praised, that they found not our concealment !

“ We heard their revels all that night. Wine they had in plenty ; and such was their intoxication,

that we could hear them firing their guns down into the streets, or at the opposite windows.

“We dared not stir, for fresh parties kept ascending, and we received no friendly assistance by way of notice or information from our aged friend. I had, fortunately, a small supply of water in my can, and a biscuit in my bag. I made the poor child sensible of this, by first eating a bit myself; but she could not touch a morsel. All the next day there was nothing but riot and plunder in the place. Secretly I thanked God for sparing me the sight of such scenes. I thought of Him, and prayed for His protection.

“As night drew on, the mansion appeared to be deserted. All was silence once more. I forced back the arras. My charge kept hold of me, trembling: by the light of the moon, I saw that everything in the room was overturned; but the old woman was not there. We descended the marble staircase. Nothing stirred; yet there were inhabitants, for we could hear the heavy snoring of some lethargic friend, who had drunk himself into a state

of insensibility, and was unconscious of our departure. I found a soldier's cloak in the hall. I wrapped it round my charge, and came away for the British camp. Your name, Dan, saved me from interruption, for when I said I was in search of Dan Long of the 48th, the sentinel exclaimed: 'The lame drake is attending upon the lame ducks.' And the fellow pointed out the quarters where you might be found. Is it not a miracle that we have reached you?"

"No, my lad, there is nothing miraculous in it; because it is not out of the ordinary dealings of that Providence, which watches over the innocent, and provides for their safety in the midst of danger. But God is to be praised still for his evident, though simply natural interference. Victory, young man, is a terrible tyrant over a besieged city. God preserve our own country from invasion!"

It will only be necessary to add, that Hewitt's conduct was duly reported to his commanding officer. Inquiry was made as to the parents of the child. The father was with Phillipon and Vieland,

a prisoner; and the child, after a few days, was restored to her parent, who would have rewarded our heroine and her husband, had the besiegers left him anything available in his house, save the dear old servant of his family, who was found secreted under some tapestry.

CHAPTER VII.

SALAMANCA.

TEN thousand soldiers in the city of Badajos, plundering and destroying every thing they could lay hold of, and followed up by herds of camp-followers, would not leave much order for a conqueror to glory in, or much that would bear reflection. Wellington had to exercise a strong hand on the third day, to put a stop to the madness of his troops. He had to march a brigade into the city, and to place provosts in the squares, with authority to inflict summary punishment on the marauders. Pity this was not done before. It

may be said that he knew not the extent of the iniquity. Happy for him if he did not; but dreadful, unspeakably dreadful, was the devastation committed in that place. Oh, that the horrors thereof might warn others of the miseries of war!

His army might well require rest after its fatigues. Satiety had glutted the many, and it required some time to cool the blood of these violent men, and to bring them into orderly conduct again. This was done the more urgently on account of the proximity of the enemy, a sudden attack from whom upon disorderly troops after a siege, would endanger the possession of the advantage won, and tarnish the reputation of the conqueror.

“Dan, my brave fellow,” said the Adjutant of his regiment to him, “do you hear what your companions say? They positively tell the Colonel you must go to battle with them. They will not march without you.”

“I thank you and them for the compliment; but

Old Dan would not wait for the asking, if he could only march like a Briton. Tell the brave boys of the 48th, that Dan grieves to think he shall not be able to accompany them on the march, unless each troop will take it by turns to carry him. No, master, no, I suppose I must be left in Badajos ; but I hate being cooped up in walls, whilst my brave comrades are encamped upon the plain."

"You are not to remain at Badajos, nor at Elvas; but you are to go with the regiment on the march."

"Then I must ride upon a mule's back !"

"No, your nurse may ride upon a mule, Dan, but you are to be honoured with one of the Colonel's horses. See, Dan, what a good thing it is to be popular."

"I certainly never was so exalted before ; but I shall have the pleasure of looking over all my comrades, and seeing how they behave. I did not dream of my being a man of such consequence."

"It is in consequence, Dan, of our first trumpeter's death, and they say that no one but your-

self or Hewitt can sound a charge as Quenton could. And, to make sure of two good fellows, you are to mount the Colonel's second horse; and to make yourself as conspicuous as you can."

Now Dan could but ill conceal his joy, for he had been fearful that his crippled state would render it necessary that he and his regiment should be parted. This poor fellow had been in the 48th from his boyhood. He had served with it in the West Indies, and was now the oldest member of it. William Jones was his junior by a month, and, as he was in the line, and Dan in the band, they went by the respective names of Old Harmony and Old Discord. This latter personage was always for fighting, never so happy as when in the battles; whilst Dan was never happier than when his band was in full play, and every soldier looked fit to be seen.

"I give you joy, dear Dan," said our heroine, "you and I are both to be exalted. My husband has provided me a mule (the reader must be informed that she was then in an interesting state)

and we are to advance to Salamanca like the grandees of Spain ; you on the Colonel's crop-eared black horse, and I on old Cuesta, as my husband names the beast I am to adorn."

"Good, my dear, good it is to be. I once was servant to an officer, and was very partial to his horses. I would make them understand my ways in a short time, for I never gave one his dinner without making him go down on his knees for it ; but that was when I had little else to do. Where is Hewitt ?"

"He is gone after the mule and the man ; and between ourselves, I understand the man is as much of a mule as the beast. He will have his own way."

"If it be but a good one, so let it be. I am all anxiety for the march."

It was not long before the British army were upon the march for Salamanca. On the 23rd of April, Old Dan received his orders, and began to get acquainted with his horse. No more drumming ! Dan was now the glorious trumpeter of the 48th,

by appointment, or election, or request; and he was as high in favour, though mounted on his horse, as he ever had been on foot. The men of every regiment have some general favourite of their own, though in the ranks, and not unfrequently look up to some veteran campaigner, with all the respect they would to a superior officer.

It is wonderful how soon some men get the perfect management of the disposition of a horse, and how soon horses know the kind of managers they have to obey. Some will never let a man they do not fancy approach them; others take a long time to subdue, require much humouring, and no little care and caution in their treatment. Some men win a horse in a moment. Old Dan was one of those who were never afraid even of the wildest brute; though he was but a foot soldier, he knew how to humour them in an instant. He had had much practice in his boyhood in the stables of an Irish Squire, who rode such horses as no other man could ride, kept such hounds as no other man kept, and had such stables

and kennels, as would set all modern ideas of a hunting establishment at defiance.

The horses were good, the master was up to his business, and he used to make Dan sometimes his boots, sometimes his jockey, sometimes his huntsman, always his groom; and more, he would put the boy on any raw colt, make him dash over the leaping-bar, or rattle him over a wall, till Dan was tired of stables which were ready to tumble down, while he slept in the loft, of a kennel which could scarcely keep the hounds from breaking out, and of a master, who seemed determined to break his neck without a halter. So, after two years of such sport, Dan left his charge of horse, and enlisted in the 48th at Dublin, and lived and died in it.

No wonder then, that the spirit of his boyhood should return to him when he found himself mounted on his horse, and following the 48th to Salamanca. He soon became acquainted with his nag, and his nag with him, until the Colonel said he might as well give it him, for ever since Dan rode it, the beast was very loth to carry the

Colonel. Dan had taught him many a trick. He never gave him a meal but by sound of his trumpet; he never tethered him at night, but by some different note of the same instrument. So that, if the animal came for water or for corn, to be saddled or to be foddered, to be tied up or to be mounted, all was done by the voice of the trumpet, which gave him so certain a sound that it never could be mistaken. His loudest blast was the morning call, to be cleaned, fed, accoutred, mounted, and to march; and, let the beast be ranging where he would, the moment Dan's peculiarly merry note rang on his ear, he would come galloping and neighing, at full speed, and with distended nostrils—to the great delight of all who knew him.

He was a remarkable horse, not for his size, but for his mould and his peculiarities. He had lost an ear by a musket ball, and for the sake of uniformity, the other had been docked to the same proportions. He was a jet black, with a star, and, not a straight line down the forehead, but one that

ran directly to the near-side nostril, just from between his eyes. He was a well bred animal, limbs compact and clean, tail well set on, mane very thin, and a head shaped like a stag's, with a muzzle so small that Dan could cover it with the palm of one hand. His eyes were so prominent that they and the lids above and below seemed to cover half the face. His os frontis wide, and his arched crest and high shoulder well sloped, told that he was born where the Arab blood had been prevalent.

Don Quixotte on his Rosinante, and his Dulcinea by his side, could never have been more elated than was our heroine on her mule, and the gallant trumpeter of the 48th, when approaching that renowned seat of learning, Salamanca, the glory of all Spain. Lord Hill had joined after his victory at Almaraz, which gained him more confidence, if possible, with Wellington, and not a little elevated the tone of enterprize in the British army.

The morning of the 17th of June, 1812, was one of the loveliest morns that ever broke upon the face of Salamanca. Great General! couldst thou

recal thy particular individual feelings on that day, when, accompanied by thy staff officers, at the head of the British army, thou didst enter the fair city of Salamanca—a glowing sun shining with ardour on the glittering array of thine arms; thy foe beyond the Tormes—fair and sunny faces, and bright eyes looking upon thee from every balcony, and hailing thee as their deliverer—couldst thou recal thine own individual feelings on that day, would they honestly speak most of joy, or lamentation? Conquerors and commanders know more than the mere expansive bubble of the moment. Wellington knew that that fair town must shortly hear the roar of cannon, see the bloody sword-blade dripping with the work of carnage, the rushing Tormes half choked with the bodies of the slain, and the beautiful hills and plains of Salamanca, covered with the dead and dying. True, Marmont had retired, and the streets and squares, the taverns and the palaces, the shops and lodgings were all open to the British. The army of England would pay for its accommodation, though it might take

what it could get with less politeness than the French, who took it for nothing. Policy alters the face of things most wonderfully: "Vive l'Empereur," under the sign of Napoleon, soon gave way to the "Hotel d'Angleterre," with the motto of "God save the King," under a head which might as well have done for Dan Long's, as for his most Gracious Majesty's.

But "See the conquering hero comes," was the tune familiar with every student of Salamanca, as the British troops filed into the Plaza with all the dignity of a triumphant position.

Our heroine and one or two other British soldiers' wives, were received with great kindness, and loaded with wine, fruit, and stores for their respective friends, who awaited the great purposes of their Commander on the Sierra of San Christoval. Nor could she or they be more agreeably employed, than in conveying refreshment to some of those troops, who could only thus share at a distance the entertainment of their General.

It was not long, however, before the booming

of cannon, and the moving of troops, the crashing of buildings and the clashing of swords, together with the advancing corps of observation of the enemy, told that the forts were making formidable resistance to the efforts of Wellington. From the 19th of June to the 27th, with various intermissions, and with some dreadfully sanguinary attacks from the enemy, and from the allied army, did the siege of the forts continue. On the 27th they surrendered, and Marmont, who had intended to relieve them at the expense of a battle, retreated. Joy then again burst forth in the streets of Salamanca. Illuminations and displays succeeded ; a solemn *Te Deum* was sung at the cathedral, and Wellington and a numerous body of his officers attended, thus giving a proof that they respected the religious persuasions of a people, whose liberties and deliverance from an infidel power they came to vindicate and accomplish.

“We shall not rest long,” said Dan ; “my nag is very restless ; and you, my dear, must now cease to bring us a supply. You must take up your

quarters in the city, and get as good as you can. The enemy have retreated, and we shall soon be after them, and perhaps have two or three battles with them before we come to Salamanca again. Sergeant Clayton and his wife, are to be left with a company, in charge of the sick and wounded, and there you are to be, and I know you cannot be better employed."

Our heroine again took leave of her husband and her old friend, Dan; and became located within the walls of Salamanca, attending with her customary zeal upon the wounded British and French soldiers, who were billeted in houses near the suburbs, adapted for the purposes of an hospital. Wellington pursued the retreating army, until they faced him at Castrejon, where some smart and severe attacks caused Sir Stapleton Cotton to retreat to the banks of the Guarena, and join the main army. Various and important combats took place, fugitives and prisoners were continually taken, and the two great generals kept cautiously ma-

nœuvring and watching each other's motions, with the hope of advantageously attacking each other. Never upon any former occasion, and scarcely ever since, were such incessant movements of one army in the face of another made for so long a period without a decided attack.

It was indeed an imposing spectacle, to see these great generals trying to beat each other by military tactics, moving about bodies of men to different positions, to see if each understood the other's game; and this not one day only, but for several successive days and nights. The armies bivouacked in each other's presence, the sentinels exchanged friendly greetings, having no hostility or rancorous feelings in their hearts, any more than the men upon a chess-board interfere with each other, till the master's hand sweeps them off.

"When will the scratch come?" said Hewitt to his friend, Dan, as they crossed the Tormes, on the night of the 21st of July, and bivouacked on the plain; whilst Marmont, having also crossed the

Tormes, took his bivouack in the forest opposite to them. The heights of San Christoval were still occupied by the British, and the Castle of Alba was garrisoned by the French General.

“We have been each day expecting a battle; we have each day confronted the enemy; and we seem to be doing nothing but shewing ourselves off to each other in defiance, and yet neither dares venture to fight.”

“I can pretty well guess Lord Wellington’s disposition. He is a most extraordinary man. You have seen him dash at two of the strongest fortresses of Spain—Ciudad Rodrigo, and Badajos, and carry them by a *coup de main* with the rapidity of lightning, and now see how cautiously he acts. He will not be provoked by the irritating insults of the French, to fight, until he chooses. He counteracts all their movements with skill, and says in his cool, collected way, ‘Keep your temper,’ meaning all the while to provoke them till they grow mad with impatience, and make some desperate plunge. You will see, we shall fight then.”

The old soldier comprehended the spirit of his General, if he did not exactly fathom the depths of his movements.

“Hewitt, get yourself into your drum if you can. I would give something if I could find a shelter for myself and my beast this night. The heavens are growing black with thunder-clouds, and we shall have such a night as none but those who have lived in a mountainous district can conceive.”

“Your forebodings, Dan, are generally so ominous, that you make me dread something for the morrow. Do you think the battle will come on?”

“If it does, we shall have a grand prelude to it, in the elementary warfare of the prince of the night, my young friend. Do you not hear the distant grumbling of what you call Jupiter Tonans? These big drops now splashing upon our heads portend a coming torrent. I hope our troops will secure their fire-locks and every man guard well his ammunition: never mind rust on the scabbard, if the blade is not tarnished. There it comes with a vengeance. Woho! Bellerophon—woho! my boy.”

Such was the name of Dan's horse, who, having at his command, laid himself down at his master's side, sprang up with affright, as a flash of lightning and peal of thunder through the Sierra, announced the sudden beginning of a storm, such as the British army had never before encountered. That at Albuera was but a trifle, compared to the impetuous torrent which now came pouring down upon the thousands who had nothing to do but to endure it.

It came not like an English thunder storm, with intervals between the flash and the report. Thunder and lightning came together, with such a crash that the very mountains of the Sierra seemed to strike fire, and to open like the sides of a volcano. Ordinary troops would have been terrified, and have sought shelter in the woods, rocks, caves, forts, or towns around; but the British soldiers had to remain at their posts.

Yet the heavens frowned terrifically; the thunder roared incessantly—ay, so incessantly, that, if all the artillery of the contending armies had opened at

once, it would have sounded no more than a pop-gun, compared with the jarring bursts of the mighty elements above. Clouds rolled over clouds, and seemed to hurl each other down upon the warriors of the earth, and then to burst, with such awful discharges of electricity, as overpowered human vision with the most darkening confusion.

How the troops contrived to keep possession of their horses, and to maintain their posts, is wonderful. Some of the animals indeed, could not be controlled, but, with bursting girths, and furious madness, broken reins, and terrified faces, ran wild over the plain, dashing through the infantry, blundering against the artillery, and rushing headlong into the Tormes, down the swollen current of which they were carried, till they reached some shallow but angry ford, and there they lay, to choke the passage. Oh, that night ! what a fearful havoc was made with the terrified animals ! The men had to control them if they could, or lose their horses. Several Dragoon horses were struck dead by the lightning ; yet, singular to relate, the men them-

selves, though holding their attractive swords, were not hurt.

“Woho, Bellerophon ! whoho ! There, gently my lad, gently !” said Dan, patting his black friend’s neck, and holding him, in the midst of such a torrent of rain as made him at that moment think of the great deluge.

To more minds than his did it seem as if God was pouring out the vials of his wrath upon the armies of men. Officers and privates, should any of them read these pages, will bear testimony to the truth of this description of that terrific night, the 21st of July, preceding the great battle of Salamanca.

“Woho—woho ! Quiet ! quiet ! quiet !”

But Bellerophon would not be quiet. He foamed at the mouth and champed his bit, and cast his head up to the skies, and shook in every limb, whilst his bold, broad, wall eye, looked more like some spectral, glaring orb, than that of an animal of flesh and blood. His whole bearing was a personification of unrestrained terror. His distended nostrils almost touched each other, affording the

smallest channel for the rain to run down from his forelock. His plunging became so fierce, that neither Dan nor Hewitt together, nor several others assisting, could hold him. At last, down came a flash of lightning, with an accompanying thunderbolt, and struck the earth directly in front of the affrighted animal.

He sprang up into the air, above the heads of all the soldiers who were holding him. His reins were instantly snapped like threads, his saddle fell to the ground before he did ; and when he did alight upon his haunches, it was a sight that would defy all the powers of a Landseer, and a Fuseli united, to depict. Four soldiers, in the attitude of unbounded astonishment—the unbridled animal, with his fore-legs like posts stuck out of the side of some dangerous fosse ; whilst his hind quarters were doubled under his body, and his head raised to the utmost stretch, as if in the vain endeavour to look into the skies. The whole group stood for a moment, as though they were marble monuments of fixed astonishment. Dan's voice first broke the pause :

“Woho ! soho, my steed !”

In an instant up sprang Bellerophon, burst away from the scene, and never relaxed his speed, which carried him directly into the forest, till he was there stopped by rushing into the midst of the French horses.

Poor Dan's lamentations were in vain ! He lost his horse ; and, should he have to retreat on the morrow, he must very soon be overtaken by the foe. The storm had not abated till long after the sun had risen, and the battle of Salamanca had begun. The light troops were skirmishing with each other, and many desperate individual combats took place.

As a cavalry regiment of the enemy wheeled in front of the 48th, every soldier saw the trumpeter's horse in the front rank of the enemy.

“There is your charger Bellerophon, Colonel, with the French trumpeter on his back ! I wish we could get him for Dan again,” said the Adjutant.

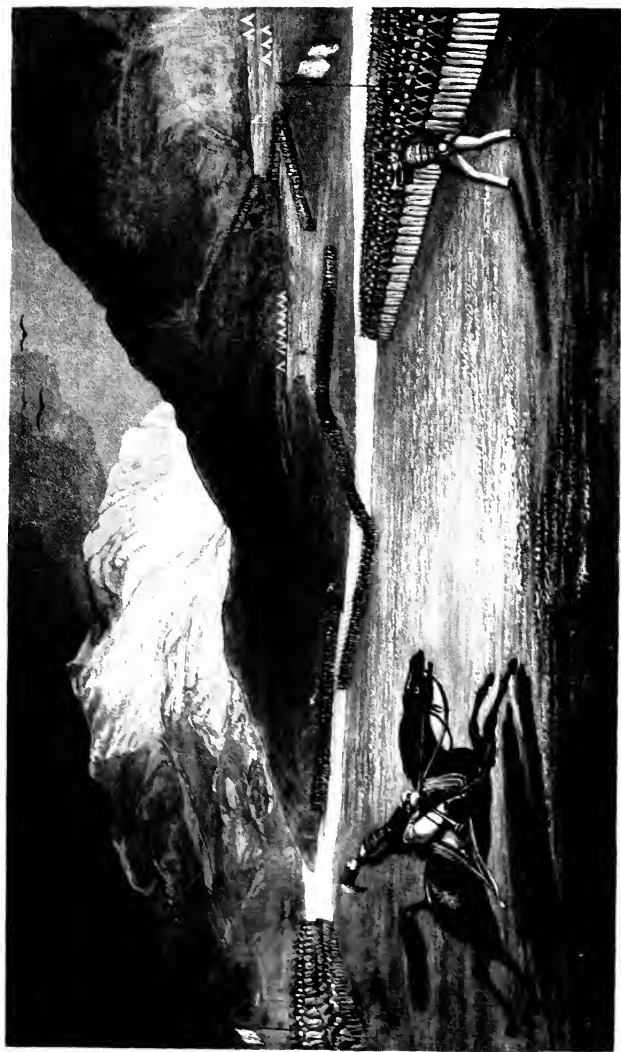
“If what I have heard be true, Dan can best get him for himself. Order the trumpeter to the front of the ranks.”

“Do you see my horse?” said the Colonel to poor Dan, who came limping, trumpet in hand, into the presence of his commanding officer. “I have heard you can make that horse do anything. Now tell him to come here, and I will give him to you if he comes, and you shall never be charged a penny for his keep.”

The old soldier's eye twinkled with joy.

“He's worth a good blast, your honour ; and, if the Frenchman has deprived him of his breakfast, I should not be surprised, your honour, if he should want one himself. Hurrah for the trumpeter's horse !” said Dan.

And with that he applied his trumpet to his mouth, and gave the French regiment such a loud and merry call, that they half suspected a charge of cavalry from the British Lines. What was their astonishment, however, to find that both regiments were to be convulsed with laughter at such an awful moment ! In vain their own trumpeter sought to restrain the English horse. He turned his head, and in a moment galloped forward, in the sight of all



The Trampeters' Horse

London, Henry Colburn, 1846.

the troops, to the British trumpeter, who kept on blowing his merry morning call, till rider and horse arrived at the hand of Dan Long, to receive their breakfast.

It was in vain that the Frenchman pulled against Bellerophon. He had made up his mind to go to his old master, and if he would not let him go without him, why then, *nolens volens*, he must keep him company.

“Ha! Monsieur. How do you do?” said Dan, “Allow me to have the honour of holding your stirrup, whilst you alight. Brother trumpeter, I am glad to see you come to partake of British hospitality. I am glad you like my steed, and if you just come to the rear with me, I have good entertainment for man and beast.”

It is not very difficult to divine the poor Frenchman's feelings. He looked as if he would have killed the horse, and probably, had he had time and opportunity, he would have so done before he would have been taken prisoner. But the thing was so rapidly performed, that Dan was master of his

horse before the poor fellow could recover his senses. Another minute, and the rightful owner had changed places with the usurper, and the gallant 48th beheld their trumpeter exalted in his right position.

But the battle raged. England and France met in hostile array, and the manœuvres of the Generals gave place to the hottest fight. Various success crowned the heights, and various contests blackened the plains. The sun burst forth, and warmed the freshened air, and quickly raised the steam from the earth, and dried the jackets of the men. The dust soon flew again, and mingled with the smoke of the combat. From morn until two in the afternoon, there was an incessant fighting, whilst high over the heads of all, the vultures of the air wheeled their circular flight, expectant of the feast they were to enjoy. The no less ravenous vultures, the camp-followers in the distance, hovered about in troops, to see which army should first sound the retreat.

It was dusk before that moment fully came. The

British General had taken advantage of the false move of Marmont, to cut off his communication with Ciudad Rodrigo, and he pressed his adversary with increased vigour. The French fled from the field, pursued all night by the victors, and the combat was renewed with double ardour with the morning light.

The most furious charge was made upon the enemy by Major-General Anson's brigade of cavalry, and Major-General Bock, with the German Legion. In the sight of Lord Wellington, and in fulfilment to the utmost of his most sanguine wishes, these gallant troops carried into execution the very thing he desired. They secured the whole body of infantry of the enemy's first division, and made them prisoners to a man.

The pursuit continued through the whole of the day, even into the next night, to the walls of Penaranda. The enemy's head-quarters were disturbed, and they fled towards Valladolid. A halt was sounded, the British army rested, and an account of the dead, wounded,

and prisoners was collected, and sent to the camp.

Alas ! Major-General Le Marchant was killed. Lieutenant-General Sir Stapleton Cotton was wounded by one of his own sentinels, after the halt was made. Lieutenant-General Leith was wounded, Cole was wounded, Beresford was wounded, and the whole country was covered with the dead and wounded. But worse were the depredations of marauders, than all the terrors of the fight. Flights of Guerillas passed over the plains in bands, robbing all they could lay hands upon. Nor would the Spaniards assist in burying the dead, unless compelled to do it at the point of the bayonet. Singular, that a people in every way so cleanly and particular in their outward dress and deportment, should shew so little decency towards the dead !

A decisive victory was gained, exhibiting the talents of the General, and the intrepid conduct of the soldier. Our veteran friend Dan, and his companion Hewitt, were here untouched, and rested in

safety after all their fatigues, in the beautiful village of San Ildefonso.

“Thank God for his mercies, Dan ! Here we are safe, wind and limb, after all our dangers. You have double reason to rejoice, Dan ; for your horse has been a prisoner of war, and you have not only regained him, but he stands in closer relationship to you than ever !”

“Thanks to our Colonel and the brave support of my friends. Not that old Bellerophon was not as good as mine, to all intents and purposes, for I had him then more frequently than the Colonel ; and, though he was called the Colonel’s, he was just as if he was my own. Now he is my own, but must still be called the Colonel’s. Here’s a health in a good glass of wine, to your wife, Hewitt. She is praying for our safety, and may God preserve her for your comfort, and for the help of many a brave and wounded companion, in this dreadful battle !”

“Amen ! say I, Dan. The most devoted husband to an honest soldier’s wife ; and I only wish, Dan,

you may live with us in your old days, in some retired village in my native land.”

“That we must leave to God. So, peace with all, after this tremendous battle of the brilliant Salamanca.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRISONER.

WAR is a game, at which those who win, frequently do so at a severe loss: like unfortunate victims in a law suit. Justice, equity, right, nay law, and all its accessories may be in their favour, and yet the result may prove ruinous to the clients; but the law and lawyers prosper. So, though soldiers conquer, and victorious armies march into cities, the admiration of men, what is it they themselves frequently gain?—reproaches, indignities, and often all manner of losses, but their honour. An Englishman will die before he will lose that.

Many, many, have so keenly felt the very idea of

the loss of honour, as to prevent it by a sudden death. Certainly it is like female virtue ; once lost, it becomes in the eye of the world irretrievable. Such high feeling stimulated thousands of British soldiers and sailors, in the period of the long continental warfare, at the beginning of the present century.

Flushed with victory, our gallant troops pressed on their way to Madrid, and entered the capital of Spain after many a hard-fought battle, many a blood-stained field, many a dreary bivouac, many a night of storm. Over lofty mountains, traversed scarcely by any but goatherds before ; through rocky passes winding along the sides of frightful precipices ; through marshy grounds, where the foot was frequently without a standing, and arms and legs had to be used in extricating the soldier's body ; through fords, where the neck was but just above the water, and frequently the stream so rapid, as to carry them off their legs ; add to these a burning Spanish sun, to parch the limbs and scorch the skin ; and then to have to fight for a nation who

would do nothing for them, and scarcely thank them for their trouble : must not some nobler stimulus than mere mortal hopes and experience would warrant, have urged them to perform their task ? Yes ! a sense of duty ; a high sense of duty to God, their King, and their country could alone have borne British soldiers through such difficulties, as their Commander alone felt them equal to, and who had the wisdom never to put them to the trial, without having well considered and prepared them for the event.

Had the writer of these pages to undertake the great task of defending his brave countrymen in their perilous course, he could not do it better, than by making extracts from the despatches of their leader, the simplicity of whose style is so clear, that a child may comprehend it, whilst the movements and the conduct of his army, is laid down with such precision, accuracy, and intelligence, that England's proudest senator might study the sentences of a warrior, and learn from them, that his words, descriptive of the great events, will never be surpassed by any narrator.

Such an undertaking would be inconsistent with the humble object which these pages have in view. The general reader must, therefore, pardon the writer, should he pass over many a gallant action which the records of history have noticed, though his pen would delight to dwell upon them; could he bring them within the compass of this narrative. He is compelled to pass over many a formidable barrier, which it required the efforts of thousands to surmount, and to dwell upon the simple records of an humble individual and her friends, whose history he has undertaken to give to the world. The hope, however, of affording aid to the soldier's daughter, wife, and widow, carries him onward before an indulgent public, and enables him to offer the best apology for the enterprise. Disappointment he may gain, as he often has done; but he remembers that the greatest General of his day gained the same, even at the very time that his victorious army entered the walls of Madrid.

What did the Spanish government for him or his army? True, they received him with open arms, with flattering words, and the most ceremonious

respect. They loaded him with empty titles, indulged him with a national bull-fight, and greeted him with *vivas*, making the air resound with the acclamations of ten thousand voices. They did one good thing—they made him Generalissimo of all the armies in Spain: but did they provide anything for his Commissariat? Did they fill his army chests with dollars, for the pay of his troops? Or, did they furnish his troops, already impoverished in their victorious march, with any supplies adequate to their deserts, or even to their pressing necessities? No! If they had, Wellington would have remained at Madrid. But he required some more substantial proofs of Spanish devotion to the great cause, than the mere adulation of their females, however magnificent or lovely in their persons or manners. Neither he nor his forces could live upon fair words, or splendid triumphs. His watchful enemy was at hand, and the General knew that no exchange of fair words would drive him from the fastnesses of the country.

It is true that at the siege of Burgos, Wellington

failed; and it is equally true, that he as honourably confessed the causes of his failure, and nobly exonerates from blame the government at home, or any other persons. The conqueror of Rodrigo and Badajos, confesses that his error was not in the inadequacy of means to obtain the end, but in the employment of men who were never before engaged in a siege; and he owns, that he saw too late that he should have brought up the men of Rodrigo and Badajos to perform his commands.

It was necessary for Wellington to retreat, or he would never have left the capital of Spain as he did. Various causes united to make him come to this resolution, which those who acted under him, or possessed minds of less comprehensive capacity, could never calculate upon.

“Dan, my boy, you must turn your horse’s head the other way, and sound a retreat,” said one of his comrades, as Hill’s division received orders to fall back upon Tormes. “The foe is a bit too strong for us just now, and these mighty bombastic Dons,

as lordly as Kings, but with no generosity in their composition, have given us but poor encouragement to fight their battles for them. I am not fond of hearing the sound of a retreat."

"May be not, Collins—may be not : but we must be fond of our orders. I'll be willing to wager my brave Bellerophon against the stupidest Spanish ass, that our General does not retire, but to gain more honour and renown for us all than he would do by advancing."

"That may be ; but we feel our spirits flag tremendously, when compelled to turn our backs upon the enemy, and in the sight of all Spain, to commence a retreat."

"Now, my spirits rather rise than sink, because I know the General is not a man to do so without just cause. Do you think his honour is not more at stake than ours ? If he lost a great battle by unskilful advances, would not his reputation fall with ours ? And do you suppose that he, who has all of us under his direction for the honour of Old England, would not have every one of us do our

best to follow out his instructions ? Go your way ; get on with your baggage, and leave me to sound a retreat at Wellington's command, with as much confidence as I would the onset in the battle. If you see Hewitt anywhere in the camp, tell him Old Dan wants to see him."

"I am glad I spoke to you, you give me courage and strength by your confidence, to make the retreat hopefully."

"Go your way, my boy ; if once a soldier loses confidence in his Commander, there is an end of discipline. We have had no reason to doubt the good intentions and good orders of our General."

Hewitt was soon by the old soldier's side, and partook of the natural fears of his companions, not for the safety of the army, for of that he never doubted for an instant, but for the safety of his wife.

"This retreat to Salamanca may be dangerous to her, Hewitt," said Dan, "unless we could send off some of the peasants, or one of the Guerillas, to inform her of it, and advise her to get upon the

high-road to Badajos or Rodrigo ; for I suspect we shall not have much rest, until we reach one or the other of these strong-holds of the country."

" I will look out for a messenger," was the reply.

He did look out—he found one, and paid one ; but he was a false knave, and in all probability his loving epistle to his wife was safely conveyed to the hands of the French General, and did not reach Salamanca before the French troops came thundering into that city.

As it was, the British Commander would have risked another battle on the heights of San Christoval, had his opponent thought fit to measure swords with him. Many were the instances of bravery and intrepidity, both in the French and the English soldiers, in that memorable retreat from Burgos to Salamanca, and through that city to Rodrigo.

One instance of intrepidity, no historian can fail to remark, namely, that of Captain Guingret ; though in an enemy, it was as meritorious for its novelty and daring, as any recorded throughout the whole Peninsular War. His conduct at the Bridge of

Tordesillas, will never be forgotten ; it made even Wellington alter his plan. He had arrived at the bridge, and found it broken down, whilst the Brunswick Oels troops occupied the tower and the ruins, to prevent the passage of the enemy. But they could not do so ; Captain Guingret, with sixty swimmers, stripped themselves, though in the cold weather, and having made a slight raft, upon which they placed their clothes, pushing the raft before them, and carrying their naked swords in their mouths, they arrived on the opposite bank ; and, in as primitive a state as the savages of any new found island, rushed naked to the contest and carried the tower, as they deserved to do. It was an exploit the mention of which may be worthy of being pardoned, even in this humble narrative. It might have been the very circumstance which prevented our heroine from hearing in time from her husband, and caused her to be taken prisoner.

News arrived in Salamanca that the English were retreating ; and very soon the flying squadrons of Dragoons came thundering through the streets.

Already the British forces had filed through the suburbs, and were upon their old battle ground. Their distress at this time was very great. Our heroine heard of the 48th, and fled out of the city to meet her husband and her friend.

She had a short, a loving interview with Hewitt and old Dan, but she was struck with alarm at their ghastly and half famished appearances.

"Wife, I thought you were by this time at Rodrigo," said Hewitt. "I sent you word ten days since, that we were in full retreat, and I expected to hear nothing of you, until we reached our destination."

"I heard nothing from you!"

"Then have I lost my dollars, and you, my dear, my letter. But I am glad you are safe. That is a blessing at all events."

"But you look wretchedly thin, Hewitt; you have been half starved—and, as for dear old Dan, his cheeks look so thin that I wonder how he can blow the trumpet in his hands!"

“We have not fared very sumptuously, my dear ; and I do not think our General is aware of the extent of our privations. The Commissariat is pushed forward, and is going on and on, whilst we have hardly strength to overtake it. Still, cheerfully do we bear our privations.”

“I think I can get you some provisions. I began to be so well known in Salamanca, and to be so well treated, on account of my attentions to the wounded, that even the French prisoners loved me !”

“Thank God for that ! I am glad to hear it, my dear. It is good even to gain the love of your enemies, far better than beating them with your swords.”

“You would be surprised, Hewitt, to find what fond creatures these Frenchmen are, when any one is attentive to them in sickness. There is a great deal of good nature in them ; and as to patience, as to gentleness, as to gratitude for my attention to them, they surpass so greatly anything I have met with in my own countrymen, that I heartily wish we

were all friends instead of foes. I am not afraid to go back into Salamanca, even if it should be in possession of the French, and I am positive I could gain you some supplies."

"You must be quick then, my daughter. Go! you have my permission to go. Clayton and his wife you say are still there? You may go in safety then."

She went.—She had filled her bag with provisions, and was engaged for a moment, taking leave of her patients, when Clayton rushed into the room :

"Off! off! The French are upon us!"

She had but to strap her bag over her shoulder, and poor woman, she was laden before and behind.

"Adieu! adieu! adieu!" called out several French sufferers—for the English wounded had been removed—and our heroine essayed to go. But at that moment a French officer entered the apartment, and behind him several guards; and our heroine, Sergeant Clayton's wife, and two other women, were made prisoners.

It was in vain that she solicited permission to go. The tears ran down her cheeks, her anguish was very great ; but the French officer was inflexible !

The wounded soon made known to the officer the kind treatment they had received at the hand of the soldier's wife, and it obtained for our heroine the respect she deserved. She was permitted to remain at large in the same house, and was treated with the utmost delicate attention, though at the same time, with a firm denial of release. She was, to all intents and purposes, a prisoner, and she saw no likelihood of escape. She thought of her husband, of Dan, and of the British army ; and, though she had nothing to complain of in the treatment she experienced, yet she could not bear even the limited imprisonment she endured, notwithstanding all the politeness of French behaviour.

She frequently eyed the sentinel at the bridge, and longed to escape.

As she stood one evening, looking into the Tormes from the battlements of the bridge, and wishing

most heartily she could pass the sentinel unobserved, she was surprised to hear herself accosted in her own language, by the sentinel on duty.

“What do you do in Salamanca? young woman? I perceive you are English, and so have I been once; and if I mistake not, you are the wife of one Thomas Hewitt, of the band of the 48th.”

“I am so, Sir,” said she, “I am so; but who are you? You know me, and I ought to know your voice; but I do not know who you are.”

“How is our old friend Dan Long? Is he alive still, and in the campaign?”

“He is alive. I left him the day before yesterday, to come into this city, with his permission, to get some food for him, for he is half starved in the retreat. I was too late to make my escape, and I am now a prisoner in Salamanca, with Sergeant Clayton’s wife, and two other women.”

“And what good can it be to a Frenchman, to keep an Englishwoman in prison? I’ll tell you what,

young woman, though you do not know me, and I am glad of it, yet will I do you all a service. I am sentinel on the bridge to-night ; come all four of you, if you can, at midnight, and give the pass-word 'Marmont,' and I will let you pass, and so will my comrade on the other side. But be off now ; for if I am seen talking to an Englishwoman, it is ten to one but I shall be superseded in my watch. I will whisper my name in your ear, when you give me the watchword at midnight, if you will not betray me."

This was a most unexpected chance for our heroine, who thought not of any danger beyond the bridge, but communicated to her friends the great and fortunate circumstance, of some unknown countryman's salutation and promise. At midnight, the women contrived to be at the bridge, gave the word "Marmont," and as our heroine passed by him, preceded by her companions, a voice whispered in her ear, "George Sneath, of the band of the 48th," and she recognized the only deserter from Dan's band from before the lines of Torres Vedras.

The party passed along the high road, and entered unmolested the defiles of the Sierra. It was a night of great anxiety to the four Englishwomen, one of whom, however, sailed under false colours, for instead of being, as pretended, a poor English soldier's wife, it was one of the male sex in petticoats, who had resorted to the expedient of borrowing a suit of female attire, for the purpose of escaping observation in obtaining supplies. They journeyed along the Sierra, and could see the distant bivouac fires of their friends, and determined to travel all night, hoping to arrive at the rear-guard in the morning. They passed many a drooping soldier on the road that night; and, alas! many a one who had burst into the wine caves, and drank, to his own ruin.

As the morning dawned, their hopes revived, and they were anxiously anticipating the delight of friends, upon their rejoining the British army. In turning an angle of the Sierra, and when they had just caught sight of the rear-guard of Paget's division, they were surprised by being suddenly

commanded to halt; a leader of Guerillas, with hat and feathers shading his sun-burnt features, accosted them with a demand for whatsoever they possessed.

Though this was made with the utmost pomposity of courtesy, yet there was such an absolute spice of determination, as shewed that resistance would be of no avail; and our heroine's purse, with a few dollars in it, was received by the Guerilla chief with as much politeness and ceremony, as if he had received alms for some most popular charity. Had the whole four behaved with the same liberality and submission, all might have reached the army unmolested; but the man shewed no inclination to deliver his purse, and seemed disposed to resist the Guerillas. This led to the most unpleasant mortification, for the gentleman in female attire was literally stripped and flogged, and would have been murdered but for the intercession of our heroine, whose evidently female situation, though it did not prevent her from being searched and plundered, prevented her being ill used even by these marauders.

She had here, however, to sustain a loss which made her weep for mortification more keenly than for any loss of her own—that of poor Dan's gold snuff-box. In vain she begged and prayed for its return, in vain she implored them, and stated her reasons for her desire. They could not, did not, or would not understand her; and she had the deep mortification of knowing, that had not resistance been offered, she should have preserved the most valuable and confidential relic that she possessed.

Alas, it was gone! and when she reached the British army and told old Dan of her misfortune, his reply was as characteristic of the man, as any preceding acts or words of his life.

“Never mind the box, my dear, I shall not take snuff out of it a moment longer, but I shall never lament the loss, as long as you have made your escape. It is a good proof that we shall make our's in safety—I am delighted at your luck. Never mind the old gold snuff-box, you are worth a hundred of them; and, as to the Guerilla, I wish

him half as much joy with the sight of the face under the lid, as I have in that of your's, my dear, in our camp. Never mind a Frenchman's snuff-box and his intended's face, so long as the soldier's wife returns in safety to her husband, from the double danger of imprisonment and murder."

Dan was happy. So was Hewitt, at the escape of his wife, and he resolved that if she were made a prisoner again, it should only be with her defender and husband.

Lord Wellington conducted his army safely to Ciudad Rodrigo, not without opposition from his friends and his foes; not without disobedience, alas! in his own officers and men; not without having his own qualities as a General severely put to the test, even in the very last stage of that masterly retreat—but to the full satisfaction of his own judgment, and ultimately to the admiration of all Europe.

CHAPTER IX.

INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL.

Soon after the allied armies reached Rodrigo, Lord Hill's division was ordered to proceed to the south, and take up its winter-quarters in various towns along the line. Portions were established at Coria, at Badajos, Elvas, Portalègre, and Abrantes, so as to afford the least possible inconvenience to the people, and at the same time, give protection to the surrounding districts. A period of rest was actually required by both armies; and, as the winter had set in, the operations of both must of necessity be limited, and confined princi-

pally to the internal economy of their respective camps.

“We are likely to have a little rest, old comrade,” said one of the 48th to Dan, as they were entering Elvas. “I hope we shall soon have all arrears of pay as well, for my shoes are worn out, my hose threadbare, and I have scarcely a whole covering to my skin.”

“And yet, old fellow, you wonder that our Commander should require snug quarters, and not be at this very time firing away at the French beyond Burgos. Have a little patience, and, as I’m a living man, before this time next year, you will see the French beyond Burgos.”

“But, Dan, it was a hard thing to beat the French out of Madrid, and harder still to be ourselves beaten out again.”

“That I deny. It might be a hard thing to carry our arms successfully so far; but when supplies fail, and allies do not come forward, it becomes a much easier thing to give up what you have got, than it was to get it. I have lived long enough to know

that it is a very difficult task to earn a hundred pounds; but it is a very easy thing to spend it when you have got it. So with the British army; it was hard work to gain so many battles and win Madrid, but a very easy thing indeed to lose it. I am content. We shall soon regain our lost position, only have faith in your leader."

"Well, Dan, you must be glad of a little rest."

"As to that, Dan is never better in health than when in full exercise. We must not expect that we are going to remain inactive because we are not actually fighting. We have a great deal to do, much hard work to perform, to raise recruits, reorganize new regiments, exercise ourselves in masses, in manœuvres, in marching, and above all things in cooking."

"You do not want to make French cooks of us, Dan?"

"No, but I wish we had as expeditious a method of cooking our rations as the French have in cooking theirs. The thing is done with them, before

we have begun ; fires lighted—water boiled—provisions all distributed without the least confusion, and the men ready for the march, before we have swallowed a mouthful.”

“How do you account for this, Dan?”

“Simply because the labour is properly divided. There are in every regiment a number of men set apart for this purpose, hewers of wood, drawers of water, cooks, and distributors, all ready to work when the regiment halts ; and if, instead of the English hurry-scurry, with the old iron pot which takes hours to boil, we had a tin saucepan or kettle, we should do the thing with as much decorum as the French, and be ready to march in half the time. This must be amended, and many things besides.”

“Ay, Dan,” said Hewitt, as he came alongside his old friend, “and if we had a few tents to pitch, it would not be amiss. Here’s my poor wife and I have had to gather dry leaves, if we could find them, and make our bed, like the babes in the wood, which every morning’s blast blew away again.”

“Well, Hewitt,” said the soldier’s wife, “how thankful ought we to be we have our health ! We have made many a house, clumsily I own at first, but by degrees we became accomplished builders. We have had to make many a house of nothing but boughs of ilex, and mountain firs ; and, thanks to our dear friend Dan, we have slept as soundly as if we had blanket, coverlet, and down, for our repose.”

“Ay, my dear, I dare say you are glad we are getting into winter-quarters. Remember your promise. Your first boy is to be called Dan, and I am to be sponsor for him ; if there is anything in him like father or mother, he will be like me only in name, for never did I see two finer specimens of the British nation than your husband and yourself. Thomas ought to have been in the Grenadiers, and you, Queen of the Amazons. If your child be named Dan, he will not, if like you or your husband, be unlike Dan Long, for he will be anything but short. But here we are at Elvas, and I must see again the poor Portuguese widow,

who nursed me with my broken shin. I have no little joy in visiting her again.

Dan and the soldier's wife soon found the widow, and made her a happy woman by some substantial gift of kindness for her winter's store.

Some of the sick had to move on by easy stages to Abrantes, on account of the good hospital established there ; others went on to Badajos.

The English were not so favourably received among the Portuguese as they ought to have been. They had fought hard to keep the foe from their hearths, and the plains of Albuera and Salamanca, though whitened with their bones, did not make the Portuguese or Spaniards behave even with decency towards the British soldier.

"Dan Long," said an orderly soldier, "you are to move with a detachment to Badajos. You are an old soldier, skilled in training and drilling men ; your services will be in requisition every day ; Hewitt is to accompany his wife to Abrantes, and to see the sick safe into the hospital, and to help the surgeons in their duty."

"Then farewell, my brave trumpeter and friend," said Hewitt, "you have been more like a father to us than a companion. God bless you, Dan!"

"God bless you, my young friends!" said the old soldier. "I must do my duty, and, if we enter upon another campaign together, I hope we shall find each other improved in every respect. Take care of your wife, Hewitt, and keep a sharp look-out upon your bivouac. These border mountains are full of robbers, and even a soldier is not always safe. They are not quite so polite as the Spanish Guerillas, but will take all you have and leave you naked. Keep a sharp look-out. Farewell, my daughter, I wish you a prosperous time at Abrantes."

"Dan, good bye, I often think of the snuff-box. I wish I had it now!"

"For what, my dear? It would do neither you nor me any good, and as to using it when the wars are over, who can tell whether the French Count or Dan Long may either of them survive. I say again, I am not sorry you have lost the snuff-

box. All valuables ought to be sent to the army-chest, and I wish my gold snuff box had been turned into Spanish dollars for the good of the army, instead of occupying a Guerilla's pocket ; but no more of it, my dear ! Fare ye well."

The friends parted, Hewitt for his mountain course and Dan Long for Badajos.

It was not the pleasantest time in the year for travel, under any circumstances. The wintry blasts of November began to roar angrily among the forest trees, and the nights were piercingly cold. The few brave fellows too, who were sent to Abrantes, so far from the camp, were almost like the leaders of a forlorn hope. Their wounds did not require any immediate dressing ; but their constitutions were so worn out with their exertions, that it was thought advisable for them to be sent under proper escort so far into Portugal, as to be out of the way of any camp noise or interruption. Sergeant Clayton and a company of soldiers were sent with them.

It was not all pleasure, their journey to Abrantes.

They had mules to ease their march, and for exchange with each other, and they were indulged with a luxury which few possessed during the first two years of the Peninsular war—namely, a warm tent to sleep under. And it was well they had it, for the sequel will shew that not all the watchfulness of the sentinel could guard the party from attacks from enemies they could not see by day, and frequently could not hear by night.

On the second night after leaving Elvas, as our heroine lay near the side of the tent and lost in slumber, perhaps dreaming of Dan Long and his lost snuff-box, she was suddenly awakened by something tugging at the old soldier's cloak in which she was wrapped. She rose up, and still she felt something pulling and snuffling; at last she heard a low angry growl, and her conjectures were instantly formed as to the visitor. The tent itself was evidently lifted up, and a wolf was tugging at the covering, to get at her feet. The animal had crept under the lower part of the tent, which had again fallen down to the level of the earth, so that

the wolf's tail was the only part of his fearful figure, and that only in part, on the outside of the canvass.

"Wolf! wolf! wolf!" exclaimed our heroine, as loud as she could, to the great alarm of every inmate of the tent; and little did they imagine that at midnight they should be called up to a wolf-hunt, even under the cover of their own habitation.

In a moment, up sprang the men and two women of the party, but our heroine very wisely kept her recumbent posture. Still she found that her cry was re-echoed. "Wolf! wolf! wolf!" and a shriek from one of the terrified women told that the monster was close upon her. Swords were drawn, pistols were cocked, and bayonets ready; and the wolf was as frightened as the women. He banged at the canvass, leaped up as if it were a wall, and fell back again directly upon our heroine, who still thought it best not to stir, though the wolf crouched against her head, and she could hear him, gnashing his angry jaws, and breathing like fire

near her face. The beast, however, was too terrified to take any notice of her. As the sentinel opened the partition, the wolf, as if he caught a glimpse of hope, shot across the tent and encountered the powerful grasp of the man, who, in the darkness, not knowing what it was, caught him as he sprang directly against him.

One has heard of catching a Tartar, but catching a wolf in one's arms is something new in the annals of the marvellous. The reader may suppose that it was not very marvellous that the man should be bitten, which he certainly was, and as it may be supposed, he was not long in shaking off his rough antagonist.

“ Here he is, here he is ! kill him, kill him ! ” but the wolf was not killed at that moment, and in the confusion it was extremely fortunate that no one else was. It was dangerous to strike anywhere. They were in darkness, and darkness always adds to the terrors of the imagination ; each one felt the wolf, either bolting against or creeping near him, or heard his growl, or saw

his eyes glare. But the wolf was a lucky fellow, for he fortunately in his struggles, got his head under the loose place where he entered, and made his exit just as Corporal Bowles struck a light in the pan of his pistol, and all eyes were strained to discover him.

“Where is the wolf?”—Search was made without difficulty; our heroine remained unhurt, and had the Corporal’s arm not been bitten, some might have thought it a false alarm.

“What fools we all are!” exclaimed Hewitt, “not to have a lamp suspended from the centre of the tent.” How true is it that experience only, will teach men true caution. Had a lamp been burning, probably the wolf would not have ventured into the tent, and if he had, might easily have been dispatched. But a lamp burning has its dangers and inconveniences, as well as its advantages.

The night after this adventure, the lamp was burning with a good light. The snow had begun to fall, and our heroine and the party had but one more day’s journey through the Sierra. That

night, however, was a very eventful one, and the lamp, in some measure, was the cause of a disaster which otherwise might not have happened; and which proved worse than the alarm of the wolf.

It is impossible to give a just idea of the wild state of the Portuguese peasants and people, at the very time when Lord Wellington made his wise pause at Ciudad Rodrigo, to refresh and recruit his army. Not all Beresford's tact could at that time enforce discipline among the Portuguese troops. The surprise, however, may be much qualified, when it is known that the poor fellows were only half clothed, half fed, never paid, and rather encouraged than otherwise to detest the English. Lord Wellington's remonstrances were strongly urged against the heads of the government in that country, for their barbarity. In some instances, he himself had to exert a strong arm to subdue the pilfering marauders of the country; and indignant, indeed, must he have been to discover that men high in power could be so degraded as to let petty jealousies and hostile

persuasions, urge them to treat him and their best friends with indignity.

Just at this time, a formidable band of brigands infested the country near the town of Abrantes, and carried on their depredations to a most fearful extent. They would assume the garb of peasants by day, and pretend to be in search of employment, when they were really only acting as spies in quest of some fit occasion for midnight plunder. Soldiers had deserted the army to join this banditti; and, strange as it may seem, these bad men could act boldly under a villanous leader, even to rob their own countrymen or their allies, and desert the ranks of a brave man and a good cause for the exercise of their swords. This formidable band used to separate into companies, and after certain days to unite for the division of their spoils.

One of their scouts had discovered the troop of soldiers on their route to Abrantes, and had reconnoitred their position, counted their numbers, ascertained that they were sick, and the probable gain if they should attack them. This he did by

artfully pretending to have been plundered and left upon the road ; when, a very few paces from the spot where he lay, his arms, and clothes were concealed in the thicket. In this manœuvre, however, the fellow had exposed to British soldiers the dangers they might expect, and in consequence had awakened in them double vigilance. Had not his tale, if true or false, created suspicion, they might have been taken unawares.

“ I did not like that fellow’s appearance,” said our heroine to Hewitt. “ He brings to my mind the warning of our dear friend, Dan. ‘ Look out sharp for your bivouac !’ Now, to my mind, that wretch whom some of you have relieved is more like a cut-throat than a beggar. Did you see his glance at us ? Did you see his eager look at the corporal’s pouch, as he gave him a maravedi, and how very little like a real beggar he took it ? Now, Hewitt, will you for once fulfil my orders ? It may be curiosity, but just do it for my sake. Now go back, and look after that fellow, as we have but just turned round this rock ; if you find him lying

there still distressed and wounded, he is a beggar, if not, look sharp, as Dan says: 'Look sharp to your bivouac.' "

"Your suspicions do in some measure correspond with my own. I will just tell the sergeant, and do as you bid me." He had full permission to go. He went, and instead of finding the fellow lying upon the spot where they had left him, he saw him standing on a higher ledge of the rock, and with a gun in his hand. Lucky for Hewitt, he had one also ready primed and loaded, for the fellow thinking he was unperceived, and imagining Hewitt was a lone traveller, was preparing to give him a murderous salute. His purpose, however, being satisfactorily gained, he returned to his company.

"You were right, wife. That fellow was as sure as you said it, neither more nor less than a brigand. I saw him with his gun in his hand, and I verily believe he is not far from his companions. I must report my discovery to the sergeant."

"Your wife has deeper penetration than I have. I did not think it when I saw the fellow, and was

completely taken in by his plausibility. Now, Hewitt, we must be upon our guard. I shall propose that the ten soldiers all lie under arms this night, that we double the sentinels on duty, and that every man has his pistols well loaded and primed, his gun in hand, and his cutlass buckled on him. I like your wife's vigilance and will equal hers, if I can, this night."

It was a fortunate circumstance, truly providential, that the eye of our heroine happened to fall upon that villain. Virtue, valour, honesty, fidelity, and love, are in this life great gifts of wisdom, and our heroine possessed them in high degree. They sometimes meet with their reward when but little expected, and when they do, the possessor most promptly gives thanks to God, from whom all real virtues can alone proceed. How singular that her observations should have been the means of preserving the lives of all the party; no one else had the least suspicion awakened. So humble was the instrument of wisdom thus used to preserve life; but life was not preserved without a struggle.

The tent was pitched; each soldier was made acquainted with the danger, and no one, male or female, closed an eye that night. Neither our heroine nor her companions attempted to lie down to rest, but sat, hour after hour, watching the countenances of the armed soldiers. Even the sick had provided themselves with weapons, determined to defend the inside of the encampment, should the supposed enemy effect an entrance.

It was a night of general watchfulness, and well it was so; for anything but the utmost vigilance and activity must have terminated in the total destruction of the party. The night was unusually windy. Blast after blast roared over their heads. How fearfully grand is the howling of the wind on a night of watchful terror! Sweep over sweep comes the rushing, moaning, stormy blast, and the lull is not less fearful on account of the expectation of the coming roar.

It was in one of those stilly moments that a foot-fall was heard from the adjacent summit. It was as if a man jumped from a height of some five

or six feet upon a rocky ground. Another ! another ! and another ! and then came the bellowing winds bursting over their heads, and shaking the tent even in its sheltered position. The men all rose, thankful for this indication of an expected enemy. In another moment, Hewitt put his head into the tent, and like the great commander on the battlefield, he spoke but two words : " To arms ! " and every soldier filed out of the tent. The sick closed up the rear, and had scarcely taken their position, before a bullet came whizzing through the tent and very nearly blew the lamp out.

" Down ! down ! " said our heroine, forgetting in a moment that she was not a commander. " Down on your knees, my brave fellows, or you may be killed in the tent ! " for singular to relate, their figures inside that space, from the powerful light of the Spanish lamp, had become the first mark for a volley ; and, scarcely had they dropped at the suggestion of our heroine, when a volley poured through the tent, tearing a hole that soon admitted air enough to extinguish the light. No second

volley entered the tent. The snow on the ground rendered the figures of the brigands perfectly open to the view of the soldiers, who, prepared for them, formed in line in a moment, and gave their cowardly attack such a reply, as in another sent six villains into eternity.

A desperate rush succeeded. Swords, pistols, carbines and blunderbusses, rang in succession. The brigands were twice the number of our party, but had not half the discipline. They rushed like madmen upon the soldiers, and met a madman's death. They fought, but it was with the desperation of men who know they have not a good cause, and consequently have no steadiness of action. Sergeant Clayton and Corporal Bowles acted as commanders, and well did they imitate British officers. The fire slackened—the robbers wavered. “Charge bayonets !” was the word, and as the fellows were endeavouring to climb up the rock, the soldiers charged in form, and only five men escaped.

“Stand to arms !” was the sergeant's order, as no enemy any longer ventured to shew himself.

“Stand to arms, my brave fellows ; there may be a reserve. Load your guns, see your pistols are right. Keep your swords drawn, and take no heed whatever of the rascals lying around you.”

They obeyed, as if the great Captain had himself been present. They halted round the tent ; but one man of their own party was missing, and they could not search for him at the moment. An hour passed away. No gun was heard, no beacon fired, no signal that any more might be expected. Lamps were lighted ; a torch was obtained from the tent, and the battle-field examined.

The first man found was their comrade, Isaac Cole. He was not dead. He had received a ball in his groin, and a cut over his brow. Poor fellow, he was carried into the tent, and all that could be done for him was done by the grateful inmates, his comrades and companions ; but he smiled in death, he kissed the hands that helped him, and as if he were conscious he had done his duty, he bowed his head upon his breast, and sank into the arms of those who supported him.

The next brought in, was the very rascal who had begged alms of the party in the course of the day's march. Never was there such a contrast between the death of duty and the death of disobedience. His frantic eye rolled wildly through the tent. The villain had his senses, keen, quick, susceptible, and poignant. He saw that he was detested. He saw no one to pity him. He beheld but the scorn and execration of those around him. He knew that he deserved it all; and to see his writhing tortures, his agonized features, to hear his horrid screams and execrations, as death hovered over his senses, and the demon of impenetrable darkness dragged him down to despair, made the stoutest soldier shudder, and declare that this villain seemed to die the very death of the damned ! Twelve men lay dead upon the snow, and the morning brought some friends of charity, who dared not venture upon the night's encounter.

Reports spread far and wide, that a great battle had been fought between the soldiers of Wellington and the banditti of Abrantes; and though it was but a skirmish, yet it was not without its moral

effect, and was one of the first blows to the brigand system, which had been so daringly pursued. Two wounded men were taken the next day, and hanged upon the walls of Abrantes; and thus did the soldier's wife become a useful though humble instrument of effecting the overthrow of a most desperate gang.

The party arrived safely at Abrantes. Their fame had preceded them, and on account of their conduct in the hills, they were warmly received by the inhabitants.

The violent excitement produced by this incident was attended with a personal misfortune to our heroine, who, shortly after her arrival at Abrantes, was taken ill, and brought prematurely into the world that offspring which she had been expecting. She had many kindnesses shewn her, not only by the Portuguese women, but by every one of the troop; invalids and all remembered that under God they were indebted to her for their lives; and they did not fail therefore to pay her the respect she so well deserved. Her infant survived the recovery of its

parent only about two months. It was never strong and died before any orders arrived for the party to rejoin the army. The mortification of this disaster was sincerely felt by old Dan. Still, in his characteristic way, he said: "Well, God's will be done! The chicken will sometimes be taken away even from under the hen's wing." Our heroine received such kindness from many friends, that though her loss was great to herself at the time, yet she had ample reason to see that it was better both for her and her child thus to be separated early, than to have to encounter the dangers of the camp, and probably a more lingering or untimely death.

She gradually recovered, and in the spring of the year, joined the regiment with her husband; and again became associated with its operations.

CHAPTER X.

VITTORIA.

DURING the winter of 1812, the British army was strengthened in every limb. Lord Wellington had visited Cadiz and Lisbon, had inquired into the state of laxity into which the soldiers of Spain and Portugal had fallen, and obtained powers to make such alterations and dispositions of things, as the exigencies of the times required. Of his comprehensive genius, even the present generation, though witness of his efforts, can form no just idea. It will only be when future years shall have weighed him in the scales of historical justice, that his preponderating talents will be fully appreciated.

One cannot help, even in speaking of the humble

individuals forming mere cyphers in this great man's operations, being drawn away from the narrative, to hint at the combinations of the master-mind, under which the humbler spirits worked. So men are drawn from the minutiae of nature, to contemplate the majesty of the Creator. It is indeed to compare small things with great, even to mention the great Captain of the age, as one of the humble instruments in the hands of God ; for the greatest are indeed but cyphers, in the conduct of his mighty affairs. The same providence, however, is shown to the concerns of a little village, as to those of a great empire ; and, if governed by his Spirit, will be conspicuous for the encouragement of peace and contentment. Every soldier hopes for peace when war is stirring. All know that the chances of battle, are a thousand to one in favour of death ; yet the fearful odds against them do not deter men from taking them, and still hoping for life. And truly if God be their hope, their single chance amounts to such an absolute certainty, as to make the thousand flee before them.

Colonel Simeterre was applied to, just at this time, by General Hamilton, who was ill, for permission for our heroine to attend him in his sickness, as he had heard from many quarters of the peculiar qualifications possessed by the soldier's wife, for the office of nurse.

Accordingly our heroine was sent to the mansion which General Hamilton occupied : and here it was, while attending upon the General, that she had her first interview with the Commander of the allied armies. The General was very ill, and Lord Wellington paid him a friendly visit. He observed his nurse, and said to her :

“ What countrywoman are you ? ”

“ Irish by birth, your Grace. Born on the Rock of Gibraltar, and an English soldier's wife.”

“ What regiment ? ”

“ The 48th, your honour.”

“ Have you been long with the army ? ”

“ I have been all through the campaign.”

“What’s your name?”

“My maiden name was Wellington, and my present name is Hewitt. My husband is in the band of the 48th.”

Lord Wellington smiled, and the General observed, that she had been known to poor Donnellan, and Duckworth.

“Bring me a glass of cold water.”

And our heroine had the honour of conveying a refreshing draught, to the great man’s hand. Nor has that been without its reward. In the days of her widowhood, her claim to the charity of the hero was acknowledged, and she received a substantial proof of attention in her distress, through the hands of a county magistrate of Norfolk,* who represented her case to the Duke.

She remained in attendance on General Hamilton, until her own anxieties induced her again to join the army, and to leave the service of a general officer, for the more congenial one of waiting upon

* The Rev. J. D. Borton, Rector of Blofield.

a husband, and her friend. It was not that she was not well paid ; it was not that she wanted anything for her own convenience and comfort ; neither was it that she did not give satisfaction to the General, in her attendance upon him, nor that he did not improve under her care. The General was kind to her, and would have had her stay ; but, when the heart is away, what is the use of arms or legs ? They cannot perform the duty of the heart, and consequently their possessor can enjoy but little satisfaction.

Our heroine, in spite of all attentions, did not feel herself comfortable in remaining any longer away from the society she loved ; and she told the General she could not stay longer, and, as he was now approaching convalescence, she requested a discharge from his service, and a letter to the Colonel of her regiment.

She received both from General Hamilton, and joined her companions on the ever-memorable march of the British army to the glorious field of Vittoria. She came with a character consistent throughout for virtue and honour, and was delighted at the glee

of old Dan, who with no little triumph, crowed on his black charger, Bellerophon, for he had been, in his way, instrumental in bringing about the discipline, which then and afterwards, graced the arms of Wellington.

“I told you, Collins, that we should come again to Madrid, before another year should come round ; and here we are, my boy, without one drop of blood spilt in our advance, and with as brave a front as ever looked an enemy in the face.”

“But we have no enemy to look at, Dan. They are all fled ; King Joseph and his women are filling the road to Burgos. I should like to see that castle again. We got so far before, I wonder if we shall now get beyond it ?”

“Wellington will retreat no more, take my word for that. I told you he would retreat, but for the purpose of strengthening himself ; and now, the very sight of his army, equipped as it is, and organized with vigour in every department, makes the enemy flee at the sight of it.”

“Yes, Dan, at the sight of our numbers and

strength. Frenchmen are not easily scared. We must not expect to awe the French out of Spain."

"No, boy, no ! but our leader's movements seem to ensure such indisputable advantage, that more honour is to be gained by getting out of his way, than by confronting him. Here we have come triumphantly forward, with an army moved as expeditiously as if it were upon parade. Mountains, rivers, wolds, and marshes, could not impede our progress ; and the inhabitants of Madrid behold a spectacle of power re-invigorated, forming such a contrast with our last year's feebleness that they look at us with the utmost astonishment. That retreat produced these things. Our Commander saved more, by his own single and determined courage, than the whole united forces of the army could have gained last year, at this place.

"Bravo, Dan !" said our heroine, who at that time came up to his stirrup, and looked him calmly in the face. "Bravo, Dan ! I always said you were a good prophet, and what is next to be ?"

“What, my dear? Why, on to Burgos, to be sure, and on to the Pyrennees, and home through France; how would you like that?”

“I should like it much, Dan, if I could but recover your gold snuff-box. We might stand a chance of being well received in France, and you would be rewarded.”

“But this trumpet, Mary, must sound the onset many a time before then, and old Bellerophon and old Dan may be placed *hors de combat*, before that time. But you are with us at Madrid, and what do you think of it, my daughter?”

“I think, Dan, it looks like anything but what I expected to see. I was told in Salamanca that it was the very life and joy of the kingdom; but I see only a dull and dirty-looking place, except the great palace of King Joseph. As to the river, why, people seem to have to shove boats over dry flats, to get along the stream. Every man I meet, Dan, seems like your description of old Cuesta, the Spanish General—a pompous ass, with long ears, and a long tail; but very little else worthy of notice, except his stupidity.”

“ Well done, daughter ! you are a fair judge, and an unfair one, for you are fair in yourself, not far off in your fancy ; but as yet you can only judge by first impressions.”

“ I wish my first impressions may give rise to fairer ones. But, until they do, Dan, just let them abide, until they have reason to be superseded by better. I hear we are to be indulged with a grand bull-fight, in honour of our return ; and we women are all to be admitted.”

“ The sight of the place is more brilliant than the sight itself, which is but a sorry provocation of a poor beast, to his own destruction. I prophecy that you will be disgusted. There is no accounting for tastes, my dear : but I have always observed, that where females delight in scenes of wanton cruelty and brutality, there are more cowards among the people, than if they remained at their distaffs. ‘ A merciful man is merciful to his beast,’ says the proverb ; and in these scenes, to my eye, the poor beast is much more noble than the Spaniards. I do not think you will like it.”

“I am sure I shall not, after what you say, Dan, and I do not think I shall go.”

“Nay, go by all means. You will see the people of Spain to the best advantage. I would have you go, and I will obtain leave for Hewitt to go with you ; but I have seen enough of it at our former visit. Go, by all means.”

The bull-fight is a sight in Spain, more popular than any sight which can be mentioned in the customs of any other country. The whole population of Madrid seemed mad with the expectation of the scene, in courtesy to the allies. Half the vast Theatre of the Plaza de Toros, was allotted to them, and the whole northern side of the amphitheatre reserved exclusively for their use.

“The people seemed to me,” said our heroine to Dan the next day, “the people seemed to me more mad than the bulls. If they would but go as eagerly and as enthusiastically to battle, as they do to a bull-fight, there are no soldiers in the world that could resist them. We got a good front place near the *toril*, and I had a fine view of the people. You

cannot think, Dan, how strangely I felt, to see half the immense circus occupied by British and Portuguese soldiers, and the other half by the nation for whom they were then preparing to fight ; and all this at a species of holiday spectacle. It made me feel melancholy to see such crowds come together to witness a scene of excitement, when their enemies were but just beyond the precincts of the place. Elegant women were fanning their sun-burnt features with large fans, and looking a strange and lowering contrast to their white veils. It was the most gaudy, flaunting sight I ever beheld ; and I never desire to see such another.

“ The great key of the toril, where the bull was shut up, close under us, was thrown to a man in the arena, who caught it in his hat. The trumpet sounded—the door was unlocked, and out came a stately bull, confronting a man on horseback, who most coolly saluted him as he came out. The beast looked around upon the multitude, and marched slowly to reconnoitre his enemy : as he came near the sides of the arena, he received several blows on

the back from the people ; but still he kept his eye upon one of the men, called *picadores*, and, in another minute, rushed with impetuosity at the horseman, and as instantaneously upset man and horse on the plain.

“Such a burst of applause issued from the crowd, ‘*Viva toro ! viva toro ! viva toro !*’ that, had the bull been Lord Wellington himself, he could not have been hailed with more enthusiasm. The poor Spaniard was but little thought of, though to me he seemed in a woful condition. The horse rose terrified, ran wildly over the arena, and was gored to death by the bull. He began to get maddened by the excitement around him ; he rushed across the arena at two men, who held a cloak so dexterously as to let it fall over his horns, whilst they fixed in his shoulders a short barbed spear. This enraged the poor beast, who now appeared to shew abundant sport, for he rushed at the other horsemen, who dexterously turning their steeds, struck him with their spears, and made him roar with such violence, that he filled my heart with terror. He

then sprang with his fore-legs lifted up, almost above the barrier, where the people were sitting, and here he received such a number of blows from sticks, that the poor brute fell backwards to the ground.

“He was not yet exhausted : he pursued another horseman, and killed the horse and gored the rider, to the great delight of the populace. But the bull was to be conquered ; and, after having his body covered with tormenting darts, there came a Spaniard with a cloak and a long sword, and provoked him to rush upon him, which he did to his own death ; and so ended the career of one bull. Various others were ushered in ; some would not fight at all—others badly, and gave poor sport ; and after a dozen different bulls had afforded savage pastime, and been killed in their turn, and the troops of gaily bedizened mules had dragged them away, the flourish of trumpets announced the departure of the president, and the people left the Plaza de Toros. I am not likely to go to such a scene again.”

“I thought you would not, my dear, and you have given me a tolerable description of the sight. But is it not more strange, that we men should delight to kill each other by wholesale, and count it all glory, honour, and immortality !”

“Well, Dan, such things have always been, and I suppose always will be. You are a soldier, and fight, because it is your duty. You blow the trumpet, and set others on, and then moralize upon its barbarity !”

“Well done, sharp one ! A good reproof for old Dan ! But I suppose battles will not always be. Men in time will bring the art of war to such perfection of destruction that it will be only a display of the most ingenious methods of annihilation. Certain death to all parties will give little hope of glory in this life, and men must find very different steps to glory in another, than by marching over the dead bodies of men in this world. Nevertheless, my dear, till such times do come, old Dan must blow his trumpet, and we soldiers must fight. And our division is ordered off to-morrow.”

The castle of Burgos was then occupied by the French ; but the town was full of Joseph Buonaparte's train of courtiers and courtezans. At the steady approach of the allied army, Burgos was deserted, the castle was blown up, and it is said that the town itself with all its innocent inhabitants, were doomed to similar destruction, but that the hurried retreat of the French caused the works to be neglected, and the trains were not fired. If so, God's providence and protection overruled the wickedness of man.

Lord Wellington had been gradually concentrating his forces upon Vittoria, for he had ascertained that Joseph Buonaparte had determined to give him battle before that place. The mock king had sent forward all his baggage-waggon, and whilst the town was illuminated in honour of his presence, he himself was ordering all his stolen goods to be moved forward towards the frontiers. Never was there a greater proof of the rapacious nature of the French invasion, than that which the retreat of Joseph from Madrid exhibited. Every public relic

of value, that could possibly be carried off was hoisted on to the baggage waggons of this King Log. Even the imperials of his own travelling carriage were stuffed with rolls of the most valuable pictures, cut from their gilt frames, out of the collections of all the Spanish galleries. Plunder, direful plunder of every species of valuable property which Frenchmen could lay their hands upon, from the highest to the lowest, found an easy conveyance in the long train of vans, of which there seemed to be no end, from the high hills of the Zadorra to the beautiful range along the valley of Irun.

No powers of description are adequate to convey a just idea of the imposing effect presented to the eye of our heroine, on the morning of the 21st of June, 1813, as she sat upon the lofty summit of the Sierra, in company with a party of poor sick soldiers and camp-followers, who, with a few peasants of the country, had collected to see the awful battle which was there and then to commence.

These guides of the country had conducted the

party, by gentle and gradual ascents, up to a height beneath which the clouds played fantastic revels ; and there, upon a projecting point whose top was formed of moss-covered fragments, sat our heroine, watching the bright sun rising amidst a flood of glory, to look, herself, upon a scene of grandeur such as few eyes could behold and forget. He rose in majesty ; he lifted the curtain of darkness, and dispelled with his beams the foggy vapours of the vallies. The mists rolled away, and long before the two leaders of those armies could see each other, they were descried from the height, beyond the reach of cannon, but scarcely out of the flapping of the eagle's wing.

On the hills of the Zadorra, opposite to the Sierra, stood Marshal Jourdan and King Joseph Buonaparte, anxiously awaiting the attack upon their long line of defence, which was spread through the valley of the Zadorra ; whilst, just beneath our heroine's party, stood the unassuming Commander of the allies, in his grey coat and telescope in hand, surveying, as the curtain was withdrawn, the

immense battle-field upon which his operations were to be displayed.

Vittoria lay before them, and in the distance might still be seen, winding along the high-road, those royal incumbrances, which were never exceeded in extent, never included a greater mass of wealth, and never were so much in every one's way, as upon that memorable morning.

What must have been the feelings of the soldier's wife, as she saw before her eyes, in all the splendour of the nations to which they belonged, the finest race of men, the best-trained soldiers, the best equipped forces that the sun of Spain ever shone upon ! Private feelings were swallowed up in the imposing public spectacle ; and thoughts, thoughts too solemn for language to describe, moved in her soul as she saw the enemy of Spain and her deliverer, confronted with such terror-speaking troops and tongues as mortal powers cannot unfold. She lifted up her heart to God ; and, if she forgot her husband and her friend, it was only in that general breathing of a prayer for the preservation of the whole British army.

The battle began at the extremity of the line, by the attack of Sir Rowland Hill upon the heights of La Puebla. What pigmies did the little creatures look from the lofty summit where our heroine was placed ! The guns which first opened their desultory fire, seemed but pop-guns with little wreaths of smoke curling over their mouths. But, as the masses advanced, and the steady firing of the line succeeded, then the sounds began to reverberate along the Sierra ; and with varied feelings of hope and fear, did the eye of the soldier's wife witness the advance, repulse, re-attack, and success of that first position of the battle, which caused the death of Cadogan, who had counted with vivacity of that morn which saw his destruction.

Hill's division was watched with intense anxiety, because our heroine's heart was with old Dan and the 48th. She more than once thought she could distinguish the black charger, in the rear of the regiment, and saw, as she imagined, many of her friends stretched upon the ground. It appeared a singular sight, to see men and horses falling dead,

before the reports of the destructive fire which prostrated them could be heard. Hundreds were seen from that eagle height, falling without apparent cause. The effect was so sudden, and the distance so great, that individual red, black, or green spots distinguished masses, who appeared to be smitten, as it were, with sudden sleep. Here and there, indeed, might be seen a single flying steed, appearing no larger than a lady's lap-dog, galloping without a rider, and stopping only at the brink of the river. The smoke from the booming cannon, and all the different parks of artillery, looked like small white clouds, which curled up the sides of the mountains, and did not, for any lengthened period, hide the moving masses of the battle.

From her lofty height, it appeared to her, for a long, long time, as if neither side had gained any advantage. The most imposing troop, seeming like a long line of men clad in gold, was a body of French heavy dragoons, dressed in dark green, with brass helmets. From the heights, the helmets seemed to cover the bodies ; and, when they

rushed to the fight, our heroine's breath was suspended, as she saw them resisted at the point of the British bayonet. The gold was tarnished, the bright line destroyed, and scattered ; and by twos, threes, fours, and sixes, the golden line formed again, and appeared but half its former length. The centre of the enemy appeared to give way. The red-coats steadily advanced. At last, she saw Lord Wellington change his position, and Joseph and his staff move off, the whole of the troops aiming at one point, to reach Vittoria.

At the latter part of the day, it became distinctly evident that the victory was decided ; the mighty masses of France appeared to join each other in a confused flight, while the columns of the allies kept steadily advancing.

The peasants now conducted our heroine and her companions down the lofty sides of the mountain, every turn affording a nearer view of the still contending forces ; but the distance apparently greater to them, as they reached a corresponding level with the combatants.

It was night, and a brilliant night it was, when our heroine reached the battle field. She was directed to Hill's brigade, and found her husband in the act of removing his Colonel from the scene, into the village of Subijana de Alava.

"You are arrived just in time to help me," said the assistant-surgeon Macauley. "Colonel White is desperately wounded: we must get him a quiet berth, and you, my dear, must attend him. Never mind the plunder. It is, I hear, immense; but duty calls both you and me away from scenes of predatory discord, which must degrade the glories of victory."

Immense indeed, was the plunder of Vittoria. Independently of the one hundred and fifty-one pieces of cannon, the four hundred and fifteen caissons, the fifty-six forage waggons, and the immense stores of ammunition, which fell into the hands of our victorious troops, the staff of the French Marshal was sent to the victor, and Joseph's carriage, baggage, and military chest were captured. The extraordinary exhibition of that night, is

scarcely to be credited. At every regimental bivouac, some chosen man put up to auction, the plunder of his companions ; and, had Jew dealers from Portugal been there, cent. per cent. might have been realized, even for the current coin of the country ; for it is a positive fact that Spanish dollars, on account of their incumbrance, fetched only half their real price, in exchange for gold.

Our heroine, however, partook of none of these things, nor her husband either. They were engaged in attending upon the wounded, and at this time upon the Colonel of their own regiment. To them the plunder was an accursed thing ; they honestly thought their preservation and glorious victory more worthy matters of thankfulness and exultation, than any spoils obtained from the plunderers of Spain.

Our heroine was engaged to attend upon Colonel White, and faithfully did she perform her duty, gratefully were her services acknowledged ; should these pages reach the eye of that brave

officer, he will remember his last words of gratitude to the soldier's wife :

“ If ever you should want a friend, apply to me ; and if God blesses me with the means, you shall not want.”

The soldier's wife, or rather the soldier's widow, is in want. She knows not the address of Colonel White, neither does the writer of this narrative, or he would assuredly write to him in her behalf, and appeal to him to bear testimony to the integrity of his heroine.

The battle of Vittoria made Wellington Field-Marshal and Marquis of Wellington, K.G., and raised the quality of the British army to a standard of excellence, which it had never till then enjoyed.

Old Dan, and the band of the 48th played a triumphant march within the walls of Vittoria, and then marched forward to other victories, to the glory and honour of old England, the release of Spain, and the ultimate confusion of the enemies of mankind.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PYRENEES.

THE battle of Vittoria was succeeded by all the disastrous laxities which the unfortunate possession of rich plunder is so apt to produce. Men, brave in battle, distinguished for such efforts as no preceding army had made, and with a cause sufficiently good in itself to bear onward the noblest spirits of the age, were sunk to so degraded a condition as to make their Commander complain, that he could control them only in the day of battle. The love of plunder, the marauding disposition of the allied soldiers, actually began to lessen in no inconsiderable degree the strength of their forces ; and not only

the physical, but the moral strength of the British soldier.

The spirit of plunder is a great drawback from the efficiency of an army. It ruins thousands, and whilst it seemed to baffle the efforts of the officers to counteract it, so bold and vexatious an evil had it grown that it even became a matter of high and glorious principle, in a common soldier, to resist it. There were some regiments, however, conspicuous for hostility to this predatory madness; one of which was the gallant 48th, whose officers were ably seconded by the non-commissioned officers, in their decided enmity to this prevalent disorder.

“If a fellow will desert for the sake of plunder,” said old Dan, “he deserves to have his head cut off by the Guerillas, and his ill-gotten store divided among banditti. I hate this system of plunder. We hear of these disasters every day; and, until some strong example shall be made, the evil will not be checked. Painful as it is to witness the punishment of a man who has fought bravely in

the day of battle ; yet, if he has fought merely for the sake of plunder, he is not a good soldier, he is no better than a robber."

" I agree with you, Dan. Our swords are drawn only to preserve lawful owners of property, and the enjoyment of the civil rights and privileges of a people, against those who usurp all those blessings, and turn them into ruin. And if we take a leaf out of their book, we deserve to meet with their reward. To be taken out of the way of temptation is a good thing ; but to resist it when most inviting is better still. Thank God, we are supported in both situations. I fear, however, examples will have to be made, or we shall have men, even in the battle, when our Commander is effecting some great movement, counteracting his plan by this marauding disposition. How is Colonel White ?"

" He is better than he was, but will not be able to join us on our march. He has leave, I understand to return to England for his health. My daughter, as I call her, Hewitt's wife, has nursed him through the worst ; and she will still keep up with her husband to the heights of the Pyrenees."

“But shall we reach them, Dan? Report says, that in one month’s time, the French army is recruited in as gallant a style as ever; that Marshal Soult is coming against us, with numbers far beyond our own, to force us back again beyond the Ebro!”

“My brave fellow, that’s an easy thing to talk of, but not so easy to perform. If once our General takes a good position in the mountains, trust him for maintaining it. I have said all along, we shall have no more retreat. I believe we shall invade France sooner than leave Spain.”

“We must expect some sharp work in the passes. The first siege of St. Sebastian has failed, and the place is to be blockaded, as well as Pamplona, and we are to move on with Hill’s brigade to the fight. What say you, Dan?”

“I say as I always have done, that we must expect to have severe duty. Better so, than spending our time in the neighbourhood of Vittoria, where a set of demoralizing profligates are working the ruin of the soldier. On! on! on! say I. The hardest industry is better than indolent ease.”

It was not indolence or ease, which just then fell to the lot of the allied army, though for a time, there was a quiet in the spirit of war, even in the presence of the enemy, which was but preparatory to great events. Soult had brought into the field against Wellington, an army of eighty thousand men, which had been re-organized between the 21st of June and the 21st of July. So speedily did Buonaparte endeavour to make amends, for his brother's and Marshal Jourdan's loss. It was a singular sight, previously to the commencement of the battles of the Pyrenees, to see officers of both armies indulging in an intellectual and innocent pursuit—sketching from nature the imposing objects of this Alpine scenery.

Two officers, with their sketch-books in their hands, had evidently gone forth from their respective armies for this purpose. Both were seen to ascend to corresponding heights, and to seat themselves within pistol-shot of each other. They both enjoyed the sublime view before them; both saluted each other as gentlemen, and engaged in

an animated discussion of the various objects of natural beauty before them. They had friends to please in their respective lands ; one at least, whose views of the Pyrenees were a proof that, whilst fighting for his country, he had not forgotten to enliven others with the view of what he saw.*

Even whilst they were thus peacefully engaged, the trumpets sounded. The soldiers parted with a generous salute, and descended to take their stations in a succession of battles in those mountains, so fierce and bloody, that death had never been more terrifically busy in that country since the days of Edward, the Black Prince.

The object of Marshal Soult was to relieve the garrisons of San Sebastian and Pamplona, and to regain his footing in Spain, from which the French armies had been driven. Lord Wellington's object was to defend every pass by which the army of the enemy could advance to execute such designs. It was a proud boast which Soult made at the expense

* Colonel Hawkins' Sketches.

of others, that he would do what they had left undone ; and his subsequent disgrace proved that he who takes up his armour, should never boast until he has put it off him.

“ Who’s afraid ? ” said the soldier’s wife, as, in the rear of the British army, she heard of the events which from time to time reached her from some wounded officer or soldier, of the various struggles in the mountains. On the 27th at night, her own brave husband was brought to the rear, wounded both by a ball in his side, and a cut on the sword arm. It is not often that a soldier is committed to the care of his wife on the field of battle ; but if any poor fellow deserved to be so taken care of, this man met with his deserts. The ball was immediately, and without much difficulty extracted, and Hewitt had suffered more from exhaustion, caused by loss of blood from the cut on his right arm, than from the nature of his gun-shot wound.

“ Thank God, my dear, I am alive, to tell you something of what has passed. Sharper fighting we have never had. Old Dan declared before I fell,

that he had witnessed many great battles, but never so many as these three last days have presented to his view. On the 25th and 26th we had nothing but fighting, and such numbers came against us, that, after fighting all day, we had to retire and take up stronger positions in the night. On the 27th Lord Wellington came into the field. We were then before the village of Sorauren, and the enemy were making slow but gradual advances; still we were concentrating our forces. The battle raged all along the line, and the army gave way nowhere but at one point, where the 10th Portuguese regiment was posted. From the overpowering force of the enemy, this regiment gave way, and the French occupied the position of our line. Lord Wellington saw the failing, and gave command for our regiment and the 27th, with brave Colonel English at their head, to charge the enemy at the point of the bayonet. Old Dan called out from behind us, 'Remember Talavera, boys'! We then received our General's orders, when Donnellan marched to victory. We have

got the same orders now, hurrah !' Every man lowered his gun, fixed his bayonet, and away we went. Do you think they could resist us ? No, Mary ! no ! We drove the French from the height with the most terrible slaughter ; and just as we had sent them headlong into the dell, I received a blow in my side, which I felt just as if any one had thrown a stone at me. Then I felt a sickness, and I remember a wounded man, as I passed over him, giving me a cut on the arm. I was both too faint, and too desirous of keeping pace with my regiment, to think of revenge. When, however, we stood upon the height again in form and front, I found myself unable to stand. I staggered—old Dan received me in the rear, and had me conveyed away. I hope I have done my duty !”

It is all the best man can ever hope to say, let him be a brave soldier, or a good Christian, “ I hope I have done my duty !” There is something very grateful in being enabled to say this to the loving partner of your life, when your summons arrives to take you from the field of warfare with your own

enemies, or those of your country, "I hope I have done my duty!" It is a sweet hope, to be able to feel and say so much. And many a British soldier has consoled himself with the reflection, that either his General or his country would be satisfied with his conduct.

Moore at Corunna, hoped that England would be satisfied that he had done his duty.

Nelson, after he had received his death-wound at Trafalgar, expressed the same hope. And so Lord Wellington declared of every regiment in the battles of the Pyrenees, that "every man did his duty."

He himself declared, that with such troops, so organized, so brave, so indomitable as to stand in one part of the mountain as one to ten, in another as two to ten, in another as one to six; and yet, not only to maintain their ground, but to beat the enemy and drive him to take refuge in his own land—with such troops he could march anywhere, for he was convinced that every man would do his duty.

A marauding spirit, however, was the cause of destroying one of Wellington's most gloriously anticipated enterprizes, that of cutting off Soult in the narrow valley of Estevan. His proximity would not have been known to the French Commander had not three marauders chosen to enter the valley, and thereby betray the activity of the English ; in consequence of which, a retreat was sounded in the night, and Soult escaped.

Our heroine continued to nurse her husband with that affectionate attention, which is some reward to a poor fellow after all his exertions. He declared, that those hours were the sweetest he had known since the commencement of the campaign. Although he was suffering such pains of body as would be enough to render a strong man irritable, yet no murmur escaped his lips, no words but those of thankfulness, were ever uttered by this good soldier.

There were many in his regiment, who respected Hewitt and his wife for the general good conduct of both ; and after he was wounded and carried

to the rear, he received many gratifying tokens of respect from those officers, who, through many a weary mile and many a battle-day had been accustomed to receive that ready attention of respect, which now they felt it a pleasure to repay.

These were gratifying attentions to a mind like this young man's. Fortified as it was with truly religious consolation, his conduct did great good to those who came to visit him as a sick comrade. For that conduct was stamped with such a serious, humble, and truly calm devotion and resignation, as made every soldier feel, when he left his sick room, as if he would be a better man. His bible, which he had frequently made the object of his study, now became truly the source of his greatest composure and comfort. His conversation was as edifying, as his conduct was gentle. The reader should always remember that the husband of our heroine had received a liberal education, and that, notwithstanding his being a private soldier in the band of the 48th, he had been noticed in the days of peace for his strict propriety.

Let not the Christian imagine that every soldier in the Peninsular war was a desperate, reckless, and depraved man, unacquainted with God and his religion, and heedless of the concerns of his soul. There were many, many bright examples of firm faith and morals which could not be shaken. War is a curse, a dreadfully demoralizing curse ; but more frequently to the civilian than to the soldier. He must be governed by discipline, whilst not unfrequently, those who reap the benefit of his exertions venture to set it at defiance. The soldier, when he is enlightened with a knowledge of divine truth, is frequently found to be more faithful, more steady, fixed, and stable, in the promotion of the kingdom of God upon earth, than he who passes all his life in a secluded convent, or in a retired village. Neither activity of mind nor body is set aside by Christianity, though bodily exercise may be less profitable than godliness.

In a poor cottage at the foot of the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, about eight miles from Pamplona, our heroine had obtained such quarters for her

wounded husband, as the country afforded. He was not so far from the army but that his surgeon, whom he had so long assisted, could now and then attend to his case ; and occasionally an officer, or a comrade, would come to tell him the news. These found him active in mind, though weak in body, and conversed with him upon the dangers they had undergone. Among those who visited him, the reader may be sure that old Dan did not forget him and his daughter.

In the early part of September, 1813, he visited the cot, and eagerly commenced the conversation.

“I have great news to tell you, Hewitt ; San Sebastian fell, on the 31st of last month, and tremendous work our troops have had. Badajos and even Ciudad Rodrigo were trifling, compared to the obstinate resistance at this place ; and our sacrifice of life has been proportionate. Rey’s defence of the place, I hear, is spoken of as being the most masterly that was ever known. The brave old General, as long as a single pound of horse-flesh was left,

would not give up the fortress. He was compelled to surrender, and to march out with his reduced garrison, as prisoners of war. I understand that the French actually wept when compelled to lay down their arms; and such was the respect in which General Rey was held, that the officers of our army saluted him as he passed, which the brave man received and answered, with a becoming inclination of his sword."

"I am not sorry I was not there," replied the wounded soldier. "I shall never forget the horrors of Badajos."

"And I am equally glad, for if possible, the atrocities of San Sebastian were worse. Houses were fired, and fell upon the besiegers; plunderers from the country rushed in to share the spoils; violence, murder, uncontrolled, demoniacal fury, raged around. Alas! were I to tell you some of the dreadful tales I have heard, you would indeed be terrified."

"I saw enough in Badajos to make me tremble for the souls of victorious soldiers, more than for the

defeated or the dead. Death and hell seemed to rage there, and if the scenes of San Sebastian were worse than what I there beheld, do keep them from my view, and let me pray earnestly for my countrymen."

"I will not attempt the description. Signal as has been the victory, and merciful as are the intentions of our Commander towards the innocent inhabitants of the town, there are wicked men who so malign his character as to say that, in revenge for the protracted defence from the bravery of the garrison, he gave the town up to be burned and plundered. Malice, envy, and revenge, will often speak that which they dare not attempt to prove, because they know that investigation would expose the falsehood."

"I am truly thankful, my old comrade, for this wound. I can perceive God's mercy towards me in it, if only sparing me the repetition of horrors at which humanity shudders and Christianity is utterly dismayed. I tremble when I think of souls cut off in crime, and know that their miseries then begin forever!

Ay, my dear old Dan, if you had seen what I witnessed in Badajos, and you now lead me to suspect the same, or worse in San Sebastian, you would shudder under the consciousness of souls hurled into the fiery lake, where eternal flames inflict never-dying tortures. I saw men killed in the act of transgressing every law of God. I saw one man commit a base, a wicked murder of a mother and a son, that he might only perpetrate a more dreadful crime. Yet I saw that man's soul suddenly sent out of the world, by the dagger of a poor, weak child's direction, which was, beyond all doubt, guided by Him, who made use of the most innocent hand to promote his justice. I think of these things, while I tranquilly lie upon this mattress, and with my affectionate wife, read the awful fate of such men, in the Word of God !”

“It is terrible my young friend, too terrible almost for human minds and feelings to dwell upon, without being unhinged. I have not forgotten our night before the battle of Albuera; and I have enjoyed a sweet peace since that time, though we

have been in many a battle tumult of the loudest character. I have had my mind directed to God ; and if every soldier felt the real strength which he desires in the day of battle, from that heavenly source, he would fight with an arm doubly strengthened, and his courage doubly increased. What say you to this, my daughter ?”

“ I like to hear your conversation. It is so edifying to me, and God grant that we may long be spared, on purpose to be strengthened and improved by all such conversations. I think my husband will soon be better. The air is getting keen and winterly, and is much more favourable to him than the hot days of July would be.”

“ He will be well enough to see the fall of Pamplona. The garrison is already in such a state that death would be preferable to their incessant sufferings. A poor boy was taken after the sortie, and brought into the Spanish camp. He declared that rats were eagerly sought after in every old tumble-down house in the place ; that he himself caught two, and sold them for four dollars ; and when he

got the dollars, and found they would purchase him nothing, he wished most heartily to give them all for onerat. Cats were killed, dogs, birds of every kind—a tame parrot fetching ten dollars, for an officer's feast; and men began to look upon each other with the cannibal's carnivorous longing and cadaverous countenance. Four ounces of horse-flesh per man, was the allowance issued to the garrison! Oh, war! war! war! When will nations establish laws of justice, which shall decide disputes without the cruelties of war? I shall be glad, my dear, to hang my trumpet upon the walls of a cottage, and end my days in peace."

"Ay, Dan, I wish that the end of war would soon come; but is it true, that we shall all have to march into France?"

"It is not only true, but Wellington is actually there; and our forces must all be over the mountains, and begin a war with a people who have hitherto been free from its ravages upon their own soil. I wonder how they will bear it!"

"Poor souls! It is not the fault of the people,

but of the ambition of Buonaparte. They have suffered enough in losing fathers, brothers, sons, and kindred by conscription, to fight in foreign lands. My woman's heart bleeds for the terrors of the invasion of France."

"Mary, I believe that God will punish the people, for the wickedness of their rulers; and, if Napoleon ever should feel as a father to the French, as it is said he has felt like a father for his army, he must suffer dreadfully. That man's ambition must have its fall. God has raised him up as a scourge; and, when the haughty worm has done his work, in the destruction of the doomed fruit, he will, himself, be speedily devoured. I suppose I shall have orders to join you in France. I shall be glad to be near you at all times, Dan, though a greater blessing no soldier ever had, than the care of this faithful creature, my wife."

"I will send you word, somehow, of our movements; and, if you are able to proceed, old Dan will give you a lift up the heights, and ease you down into the valleys of France."

The friends again parted; not long afterwards, intelligence was received of the passage of the Bidassoa, and of the success of the English General in establishing a footing on the frontiers of France. Pamplona fell soon afterwards; and now, all the frontier fortresses in Spain were in the hands of Wellington, and he himself was making preparations for the invasion of the territory of France. Little did that nation think how these successes tended to the destruction of their idol, and the entrance of the allies into Paris.

That Lord Wellington had to exercise severity in his trying situation, is not to be wondered at. No easy task was that assigned to the officers, to restrain the plundering propensities of the soldiers; and, as they were never safe from death by the hands of those who were interfered with, it became a desperate risk, sometimes, to stay the rage of plunder. Still, death ought not to deter an officer from defending the innocent, even against his own men; and when an order is given, it is the duty of an officer to restrain the licentiousness of those under his com-

mand. He is a weak, if not a worse man, who, from any personal consideration, refuses to put the powers given him into immediate execution, to prevent plunder, robbery, and murder.

After the fall of Pamplona, on the 31st of October, 1813, our heroine, with her sick husband, now recovering rapidly, had joined the regiment and was present, though in the rear, at the celebrated battle of the passage of the Nivelle. To tell what she endured in her journey over the Pyrenees, would be impossible. Whilst smoking fires sent out their white volleys from the peaceful cottages in the valleys of France, the chill blasts of winter began to howl through the passes of the mountains, and terrify the benumbed troops, who had to take post on the heights. To stand still, and see the distant fertility of the valleys, whilst deep snows and sterile rocks surrounded him, would try a stout man's nerves. Imagine, then, a young soldier's wife, with a wounded husband, and enduring without a murmur, privations such as nature could scarcely bear, and you will be able to form a picture in your mind,

of what good courage God gave to those who had to fight your battles for you, while you enjoyed the domestic comforts of your own fire-side.

Stretched upon the naked rock at night, sheltered only by some beetling point overhanging your head, your curtains the chill air of the mountains, your sleep, too, often dangerous on account of frost, limbs benumbed, teeth chattering, hair rising on an end, whilst the very bulb at the root seemed to be contracted in the skin, with a gradually increasing irritation, which made you wish to tear it off; the snow falling, not as it does in gentle flakes upon the surface of our country plains, but in pieces of frozen ice, that came dashing with fury against the sides of the summits—tell me, reader, if you add to all these the anxieties of war, will you have no pity for the memory of those brave fellows who perished on the heights? Some sank frozen to death; others, and in no small numbers, deserted, and scattered themselves among the French peasantry. Even British soldiers, as well as Spaniards, left the ranks of

the allies, to obtain warm quarters amidst the enemy ; and several, who had been brave fellows in their ranks, were found dead upon the battle-field of Nivelle. To the honour of the Portuguese soldiers, there was never found a man of their nation to fight against the allies. Such as deserted went back to their own country.

One of the greatest of Lord Wellington's successes, was the battle of Nivelle. Masterly in its conception, and equally well carried through in every arm, he is said to have pronounced it the most perfect specimen of military character, for combination and steadiness, he had ever witnessed. There was no failure throughout the whole day, from the dawn of morning to the very close of night. Ninety thousand men went into battle, and the combat was one of incessant and successive movements, in which Spaniards, Portuguese, and English, alike distinguished themselves ; and, when it is considered that not three thousand, killed, wounded, and missing, united, were sufferers upon that memorably long day's fight, it does appear a mercy, unaccountably

shewn to the allies, who had to gain the strongest positions ever defended by a brave people, in the very confines of their own country.

Shortly after the battle, our heroine and old Dan, with her husband and some friends of the 48th, got quartered in a comfortable tent, and thanked God sincerely for permitting them to rest again in each other's society. The soldier's wife rejoiced to see her friends once more, and, as she always had done, lent her kind aid to the surgeons of her regiment, in dressing the limbs of the wounded, and preparing bandages and linen for the unfortunate victims of war.

CHAPTER XII.

ORTHESES, TOULOUSE, AND DEATH.

WARS have existed from the days of the giants to the present times, and mighty men of renown have disturbed the earth with their ambition; as long as ambition is the idol of men, so long will the sword continue to be the scourge of the world, and drive peace and contentment from the valleys of the earth. Men pretending to be wise above their fellows may sometimes attempt to prove that war is a blessing, and truly there are some so infatuated as to think it is so. It is well for those who have never seen anything of its horrors to

represent it in this light ; but let it touch their own land, let it come home to their own hearth, and the blessing will soon prove itself a curse.

France was now about to experience, on her own soil, the scourge which she had so fearfully inflicted on other countries, and to be made an example to all the world, of the mania of false glory, and its fatal consequences. Still Lord Wellington respected the natives of the soil, and forbade every species of plunder, cultivated the friendship of the peasantry, and generally proclaimed that his wars were with the usurper of thrones, with the Napoleon dynasty, and not with the people of France. The bloody contests of the years 1813 and 1814 on the soil of the south of France, will meet with few parallels in the history of nations. England's sons, in conjunction with Spaniards and Portuguese trained by their experienced leader, became an overmatch even for the veteran soldiers of France, though their positions on their native soil would appear to be so formidable as to preclude attack.

The winter of 1813 was a trying season for

the operations of the allied armies, with roads knee-deep in mud, fords swollen into torrents, bridges broken up, and forts all but impregnable, their leader had to keep them constantly at work, as he well knew that inaction was the worst enemy to an advancing army. He had a severe example to make of the Spanish troops, who, heated with a thirst for vengeance upon the aggressors in their quarrel, and remembering the fierce cruelties exercised by the French troops upon their countrymen, could not be controlled in their rage for plunder and vengeance, without the strong arm of the Commander-in-chief. He was compelled to order them back into their own land; and, though they had been so well trained under his eye, as to be of the most signal service in the day of battle, yet he chose to weaken the physical force under his command rather than have the whole moral force corrupted by the bad example of the Spaniards. What greater proof could a general give of public virtue than this? He did it in the sight of all Europe, in the face of a strong foe, and

in the countenance of his whole army. It was a severe lesson, and one which would have humbled any other people than that of Spain, whose haughty pride and bigoted superstition, not even Napoleon's hostile hand nor England's friendly arm, could by any means subdue. The consequence was, and will be, internal commotions, heart-rending jealousies, and violent convulsions of the Spanish Constitution till it expires.

The battles of the Nive and the Gave were full of such heroic daring as astonished even the enemies as well as the friends of Wellington, and when that of Orthes was fought, on the 27th of February, and Bordeaux was in the possession of the allies, Buonaparte's doom was sealed, his own heart smitten, and pride and madness were hastening to their downfall. The charge of the 7th Hussars at Orthes, where two thousand men laid down their arms upon the battle-field, to save themselves from being cut in pieces, was a noble feat performed upon a heavy ground, and at a great disadvantage. Had not the Commander of the allies here met with

an accident from a spent ball, which interfered with the celerity of his movements, the battle of Orthes would have been more signally destructive to Soult's army, and might have prevented the subsequent catastrophe of Toulouse, which closed the Peninsular War, after the fall of the object of all the battles—the mighty Napoleon.

Soult, however, escaped, and Wellington, leaving Bordeaux in possession of the Royalists, pursued his enemy to the broad Garonne and the Canal of Languedoc. To tell of all the heroes who fell in these struggles, or even to dwell upon the movements of the armies through each strong contest, would be to go beyond the purpose for which they are transcribed. The heart of an honest Englishman cannot help feeling the wish to speak of the firmness, the endurance, the valour, the unconquered spirit of his countrymen through struggles, which, though they have now ceased, cannot be forgotten in the annals of his country. The fields they have gone through may indeed be said to be so various as to include every species of

warfare which the world ever witnessed. Cold and heat—sunshine and storm—mountain and meadow—flood and barren sand—advance and retreat—attack and defence—pursuing and pursued—in all the varied changes of climate, country, and plan the army of the Peninsula had to make its way. All methods of attack, against all kinds of defence—fortresses to win—heights to scale—towns and cities to besiege and to defend—rivers to wade—woods to march through—hills, rocks, mountains, precipices to overcome—battles to fight both on the plains and on the heights, with the sword, the bayonet, the musket, the spear, with guns of every calibre, fixed and flying artillery, and last, not least, rockets and bombs; with mines under their feet, and thunders over their heads—in the midst of all dangers and all difficulties the brave English officer and soldier alike stood, as every man ought to stand, prepared to do his duty.

But in all these dangers the soldier's wife, at least the one whose history these pages record, had, if not the actual fighting part, that which was not

less arduous—the assisting her husband and the surgeons of the regiment in the discharge of a duty painful to perform, and which at the very last battle, at Toulouse, became even more painful, called as she was to witness the agonies of those to whom she was attached by that most powerful tie, the gratitude of friendship. Brave countrymen! whose histories the humble, quiet village pastor reads at his fireside in peace, he only wishes he could serve you all as faithfully as you have served your country; and if respect for your valour and your integrity, and true pity for one whose history is here related, can be considered as a compliment to you all, he has a pleasure in paying it, beyond that which you will feel in receiving it.

The last battle of the Spanish campaign was drawing on, and Napoleon's fall came before it. The pride of the man would not give way, though empires tottered and were wrung from his grasp. Had he possessed wisdom—had he possessed integrity—had he possessed the true love of his country—he might have concluded a peace so per-

manent, as to establish his dominion among the kings and princes of the earth; but Napoleon had no friendly counsel he respected so much as his own, and there never yet lived the man who did not require the aid and experience of others, to help him to maintain the true dignity of his own position. He who will be independent of all men, must find a place where he can do all things for himself, and where none but himself would live.

Oh! that Napoleon's abdication had been known at Toulouse, before that bloody battle had been fought! How many thousands of lives might then have been spared! One feels the distress the keener, because those who had previously borne the heat of many battles might have rested victoriously and honourably upon their arms. Had either Soult* or Wellington known that there was no occasion for the fighting of that day; that Toulouse itself was not worth fighting for, since the throne of France was abdicated by the Em-

* It is positively asserted that Soult was acquainted with the abdication of Napoleon before the battle.

peror ; they would never have wasted the blood of their respective armies for the honour of a victory. Both, however, are exonerated from such knowledge, and therefore stand acquitted of all foundation for such accusations. Grief, however, must be felt ! Wellington's object was to win Toulouse ; he won it, though the battle had well-nigh brought defeat upon the conqueror. He won it, because Soult lost Toulouse—he could not hold it—he did not hold it—he retreated from it—and though he drew off his forces in the most splendidly executed night retreat, within reach of the English artillery, yet Lord Wellington entered triumphantly into Toulouse, and the Bourbon flag waved proudly under the protection of the conqueror.

Alas for victory, when no object but death, unnecessary death is gained ! It was in the very last scene of that memorable contest, when Dan Long blew his last blast, that a cannon shot took off his right leg just below the knee, killed poor Bellerophon, and stretched our heroine's friend upon the earth. The troops were advancing, Dan

was in the rear ; his fall was not perceived at the moment, and it was only when victory was proclaimed, and instead of prayers and thanksgiving for deliverance, the light-hearted, volatile French were in their theatres, that our heroine and her husband went upon the battle-field to look after their venerable and venerated friend.

Over heaps of slain and wounded did they walk, and relieved many a poor fellow with such momentary refreshment as a large can of water could supply to the parched lips of the sufferer.

“ Here ! somewhere here, we stood,” said Hewitt, “ lend a hand with your lantern, Collins, and let us look sharp for our brave old friend. Look, yonder lies a horse ! come on, he cannot be far off.”

Poor Bellerophon's white streak down the face was the first proof of the presence of the fallen trumpeter, and there they found their dear old man, who had managed to form his own bivouac for the night between the outstretched and stiff limbs of his old horse ; he had lifted himself with his arms, and contrived to rest his back against the body of the

horse, and exhausted with the loss of blood from his broken limb, he sat, or reclined, as it were, in the shadow of death. As the light fell upon his countenance, our heroine lost the wonted calmness with which she had been accustomed to survey these scenes, and rushing forward she fell beside him, and as she thought, kissed the cold lips of the dead trumpeter ; but Dan was not dead. The old soldier lifted his right hand from his side, whilst his left still held his trumpet, and brought it round the neck of his adopted daughter, who, with a frantic delight, grasped it and placed it near her heart.

“Bring me the water, Hewitt! Stop, he lifts his head, give him a little draught.” The weary soldier received it at her hands, drank a little, looked up, and smiled.

“Give me your can, Hewitt. A few drops of brandy!” The veteran revived, but there was a pool of blood at his foot. Alas! it was seen that his right leg was shot off, and the clothing was saturated with the poor fellow’s life-blood.





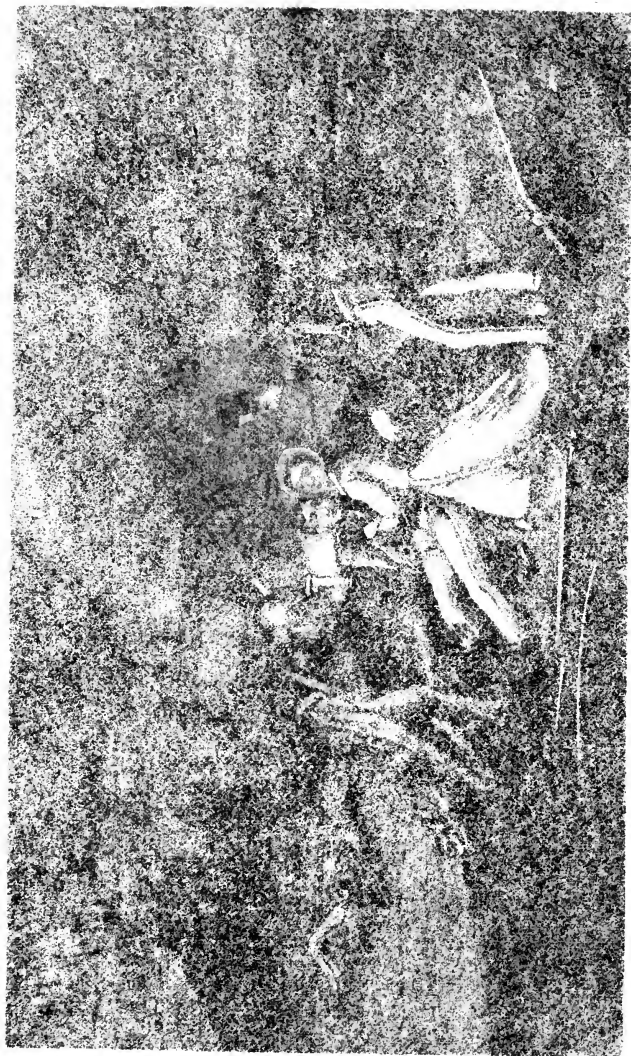
The Death of Don.

“Let us remove him into the town. Here, Hewitt, Collins, Harbour ! let us lay him in his own cloak, and each take a corner, and so bear him to the hospital !”

The brave fellow, however, shook his head, looked ghastly pale, and with accents feeble, yet perfectly distinct, he said :

“Move me not ! move me not ! God bless you, my dear child—God bless you ! Put your trust in Him ; he will raise you up friends, but none that will love you more than old Dan has. Hark ! hark ! what noise is that I hear ? It is a shout of unusual triumph ! Do let me know what it means ! It is in the town ! Hark ! I hear something different from anything I have ever yet heard ! It sounds like the blessed angel’s voice, proclaiming peace !”

And, true enough, at that moment, thousands shouted from the walls, from the town, from the camp, and from the battle-field, “Peace ! peace ! peace !” The first sound was heard in the theatre, where, though death, darkness, and dismay sat on many a



The Dying Swan

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serious countenance around that city, yet within it, within the walls of the theatre, the express bringing the tidings that Buonaparte's reign was over, was first publicly announced.

A soldier was hastening across the plain, to communicate the tidings to Sir Rowland Hill, who was in pursuit of the flying squadrons of the enemy, and passed by the spot where Dan, surrounded by his friends, was actually dying. His life was waning fast, but his military ear had caught the sound of that, which the soldier now, in hasty accents, proclaimed to the interesting group on the field.

“Napoleon has fallen! The war is at an end! Peace is proclaimed; and I am now going to stop the tide of battle! God bless you—good bye!” and off dashed the messenger of peace, whilst all looked earnestly at the dying Dan, to see what effect it would have upon him.

Our heroine wiped off the cold, chilly perspiration gathering on his brow, and her husband wrapped his warm cloak over his limbs. Calm, very calm, was the face of the warrior. His intellect seemed to be

clearer than it had ever been, and his voice for a few moments stronger, as he elevated his eyes to the clear, starlit sky, and, pressing our heroine's hand, he said :

“ God's will be done ! Thank God, my dear friends, who has permitted me to live to hear those sounds, which I hope will prove a happiness to his people, as they do a comfort to my soul. Hewitt, you will find my poor limb on the other side of my horse ; bring it here directly. Here—place it under my cloak, and, dear friends, promise me one thing before I die !”

“ Yes ! yes—we will !”

“ Dig my grave on this very spot—ay, this very night ; wrap me in this old cloak, place the trumpet by my side, take my purse from my pocket and divide its contents equally among you. And now mind what I say—love one another ! God bless you all ! Hewitt, pray with me for pardon ; and now, dear friends, lift me up a little, and let me breathe out my soul to the God of battles and of peace, who Himself is the great

conqueror of time, who gave me breath, and to whom I return it, humbly hoping that he will restore it to a perfect body in eternal peace at the last day. Dear friends, farewell! my hope is in Him who has conquered death by the sacrifice of Himself!"

Thus died the veteran, with one tranquil sigh; bowing his hoary head upon the last battle-field, and affording a lesson to those who knelt by him, such as the best christian soldier might desire to learn, and such as a faithful warrior only shall ever know.

His last wish was complied with; Hewitt and his companions obtained a spade, and on that marshy plain they dug their friend's grave, whilst our heroine, seated by his side, watched his calm features, thanked God for having given her so dear a friend through her dangers, and wept as if her heart were ready to break.

They buried him just as he had desired, and by that lantern's light three soldiers and our heroine might be seen kneeling in profound humility,

whilst Hewitt read the funeral service. They filled up the grave and laid the turf a little above the level of the flat, and scattered the mould around. These brave fellows did more. The flight of eagles which had been observed at Orthes, had been seen hovering over the camp at Toulouse; and, out of respect for their friend, they buried his horse not far from him.

With mourning hearts they returned to their regiment, and related to their comrades the end of Dan Long, of the gallant 48th. Some future day, if anything should arise to disturb the ground on which he rests, the trumpeter's frame will be found with his trumpet near him, to speak of the victory of Toulouse.

Soult was very unwilling, even after Lord Wellington had sent Colonel St. Simon with the announcement of the fall of Napoleon, to give in his adhesion to the Provisional Government; and, had he not done so, it is true that the English General would have offered him battle again. It certainly did look like a spirit of revenge in the

French before Bayonne, when they knew of the state of affairs, to provoke a conflict which might have been spared. How the officers commanding there could reconcile it to their consciences, to risk the life of their General and soldiers, when they were made acquainted with the fact of the fall of the Napoleon dynasty, is beyond comprehension. The valuable life of Major-General Hay was here lamentably sacrificed, when it should have been preserved for peace ; but, when Englishmen were attacked, they had no alternative but to fight.

Lord Wellington returned to England to be made a Duke, and richly he deserved the honours conferred upon him, and well did he receive them. A servant is honoured well, when he receives, and duly appreciates his country's thanks. His distinguished generals were raised to the dignity of peers of the realm, which added greatly to the hero's happiness.

Our heroine returned through France, and met with much kindness at the hands of the French people, who rewarded the soldier's wife with many

a token of admiration at her brave march with the armies of her country. No gaiety, however, could make her forget dear old Dan. She used to say that she felt almost as bereft as if she were a widow, so very often did she feel the want of his society in the calm and tranquil hours of life which succeeded the violent contests of the Peninsula.

She embarked with her regiment for Cork, and, instead of being a follower to the new field of victory, where Wellington and Buonaparte met to measure swords for the last time, she was confined at Limerick with the first of her sons who lived beyond the years of infancy.

It might be matter of regret to some, that they could not be present at the greatest battle of the continent, Waterloo, when Napoleon had broken faith with France and with Europe, and returned from Elba, again to deluge his country with the blood of thousands. Well did Waterloo men deserve their medals; but it was well remembered that there were brave troops, who had undergone far greater fatigues in a foreign land, during the long

Peninsular campaign, than the soldiers of that short, though sharp, and dreadful struggle, which terminated the career of Napoleon, who, had he been as personally brave as daringly bold in his conceptions, should have headed the last charge at Waterloo, and have died or conquered there. But God ordained it otherwise, lest glory should cover the memory of one, who, however cherished by the French nation for his talents, must ever be looked upon by every other nation as a cruel, intriguing, ambitious man, whose pride required his fall to be made a spectacle to the world, to show that "who-soever exalts himself shall be abased."

Our heroine was not at Waterloo. She was at Limerick at that period, and heard of the glorious victory over the tyrant who had dared to lift himself up against the nations; but her husband's services were not forgotten, and, some years afterwards, a sense of justice was shewn to those brave fellows who had fought so many battles for their country. Medals were in consequence given to those soldiers who had served under Wellington,

and the widow still wears this unassuming trophy of her husband's exploits, which records the end of her struggles in war, but brings to her remembrance the beginning of a life of care and anxiety, though in the tranquil times of peace.

"I cannot forget old Dan," she said to her husband, though she cherished a fine baby in her arms, after all her wanderings. "I cannot forget old Dan. Had he been alive now, how pleased the dear old man would have been, to fondle this boy and talk over the memory of past days. What a generous friend he was to us both! What an honest life he led, and what a happy death he appeared to die! There is something in that man's character which I could almost wish were more known to the world, for I think it would do much good."

"Well, my dear, I will one day put his chronicles of the 48th in order, and perhaps I may write his history, for the inspection of those of his regiment whom he loved through his long life. He is often spoken of now, both by officers and men ;

but let me be where I will, I shall never forget his end. Toulouse and the soldier's grave, at the moment of victory and peace, are too indelibly impressed upon my mind ever to be forgotten."

"And in mine, my dear, he will live, and always, though you are living, make me feel a portion of a widow's grief."

"Say rather, a daughter's sorrow. Now we are in Ireland, do you know, Mary, that I have a sort of hankering about me to visit my birth-place, and, if I could get leave, I should like to visit Norfolk. I do not know that my father will acknowledge me, though I feel in my heart a kind of yearning towards him, as if he would not be sorry to hear of the past conduct of his son. I am sure our Colonel would give me a good character, so that I may not be altogether unworthy of his notice. I never saw my parent but once, and then he appeared to my boyish eye to be a fine man, and a kind-hearted gentleman."

"What has put this into your head for the first time, Hewitt, I know not. I have so seldom heard

you mention even his name, that I had almost forgotten it. I do not see any harm in your going, only do not let it prey upon your spirits should you not meet quite as warm a reception as you expect. A legal claim you may not have upon his consideration, but a natural one you surely have; and there is at least affection in your own heart, which induces you to do right. So you may leave me, for the first time upon a peaceful embassy, and God grant that it may add something to your happiness!"

END OF VOL. II.

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